

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

The triumph of the Cuban Rebel Army in Santa Clara

— PAGE 6

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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U.S. hands off Cuba now!

Revolutionary gov't responds to provocations

BY STEVE CLARK

At a February 26 White House press conference, President William Clinton announced a new round of hostile measures against the socialist revolution in Cuba. The Democratic administration tightened the U.S. economic embargo of Cuba and reinforced the de facto ban on travel to the island by U.S. residents.

Clinton added that he was "not ruling out any further steps in the future should they be required." Filling in the algebra with arithmetic, U.S. secretary of state Warren Christopher, speaking while on a visit to El Salvador, said that the "president has not included any military action, but he has reserved the possibility to take that kind of measure."

Meanwhile, Madeleine Albright, chief U.S. representative to the United Nations, took on the job of trying to cajole other governments to give a stamp of approval



February 27 picket line at federal building in Minneapolis condemns Washington's aggressive moves against Cuba. Protests have been held in cities around the country.

Militant/Jon Hillson

to Washington's course.

These aggressive moves followed by two days the action of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces in shooting down two

of three Cessna aircraft that, despite unambiguous warnings by Cuban air traffic controllers, invaded Cuban airspace on a

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Socialists back Cuba's actions, call for protests

The following statement was issued February 28 by Socialist Workers Party National Secretary Jack Barnes on behalf of an SWP National Committee leadership conference held in New York City February 24-26. Participating in that gathering were members of the party's National Committee as well as an elected delegate from each party branch and from the National Committee of the Young Socialists.

Now is the time for workers, farmers, and youth everywhere to organize emergency picket lines in front of U.S. government buildings, as well as public forums, speak-outs, press conferences, and other protests, to demand an immediate halt to the military provocations, economic assaults, and campaign of lies orchestrated by Washington against the socialist revolution in Cuba.

Now is the time to take time off work and go all out to help distribute and sell the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and

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Buchanan slips in Arizona, as youth and workers confront ultrarightist

BY NAOMI CRAINE

"Deport Buchanan!" and "Go Pat! Go home!" yelled protesters as Patrick Buchanan passed by in the Tucson Rodeo Parade February 22. Campaigning for several days in the Arizona Republican primary, the ultrarightist candidate ran into visible opposition all across the state. For the first time since he launched his bid for the presidency, Buchanan blinked several times during public appearances.

The *New York Times* described Buchanan's appearance at the parade. "Mr. Buchanan, conscious of the television cameras recording the event, looked right when the 'Racist, Go Home' chants arose from the left, and looked left when the boos arose from the right," the *Times* reported.

The next day Marciano Murillo, an 18-

year-old Mexican-American, challenged Buchanan's anti-immigrant demagoguery at a meeting in Gila Bend, Arizona. The rightist declared, "They've got no right just because you have a lousy government down there to walk across the borders of the United States of America, because this is my country."

"They help your economy just as well as any American here helps it," Murillo shot back, standing his ground and arguing with Buchanan. Like Murillo, many of those in the largely Latino groups who turned out to jeer and protest Buchanan were young people. Almost one-fifth of Arizona's population is made up of Chicanos and Mexican immigrants.

In a nationwide telecast on CSPAN, millions saw Buchanan's campaign bus

greeted by picketers with raised fists and signs reading, "Nazi! Nazi!"

The same week 7,000 people turned out in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, to protest the governor's stance against affirmative action. Buchanan had campaigned against

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YS: Join fight against Buchanan!

The statement below was issued by the Young Socialists National Steering Committee.

Young Socialists salute the youth and workers who protested Patrick Buchanan in Arizona. In standing up and telling the truth about the ultrarightist demagogue, these fighters pricked the balloon of his perceived popularity among all working people. Even though the wealthy rulers want us to believe politics has moved to the right, these actions show the wide-open possibilities to fight back.

Members of the YS are joining with others to set a similar example in every state Buchanan visits. We call on all young people who want to fight against the reactionary bipartisan drive to war and economic catastrophe to build protests both against Buchanan and Washington's anti-Cuba threats.

We invite all youth to also join us at our convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota, April 6-7, where we will draw a balance sheet on these actions and plan the next steps forward. We encourage everyone to help sell the *Militant* and *Pathfinder* books, to get out the truth and to arm us for these struggles.



Demonstrations like this one in Tucson contributed to Buchanan's drop in polls

Supporters campaign for release of Mark Curtis

BY FRANK FORRESTAL

CHICAGO, Illinois—"It is now over three months since political and union activist Mark Curtis was told by the Iowa State Board of Parole that he had won his freedom," John Studer, national coordinator of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, told more than two dozen activists gathered here February 27 at the Agape House at the University of Illinois. This was the first meeting of the committee since its international center moved to Chicago two weeks ago.

"Since then," Studer reported, "the Illinois Department of Corrections has re-

100,000 march against austerity drive in Ontario

See article, page 3

fused to approve his request for an out-of-state parole to Chicago, where his wife Kate Kaku lives." And Iowa prison authorities have taken advantage of his prolonged imprisonment to try to limit the rights of Curtis and other inmates, by holding up three articles he has sent to the *Militant* since December.

The defense committee has launched a letter-writing campaign to put pressure on prison officials to end their censorship, and to demand that Curtis be released from prison right away.

On February 16 Vivian Sneed, the corrections official assigned to Curtis's application, told his lawyer that Illinois authorities were rejecting his parole to Chicago because he did not have "family" there.

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Young Socialists: 'To the streets to defend Cuba' — page 5

6,000 workers rally in Zimbabwe

More than 6,000 sugarcane workers demonstrated February 15 on a sugar estate in Masvingo, Zimbabwe, demanding higher wages. The workers became incensed and torched the plantations when armed riot police attacked their protest. The workers demanded an increase in the minimum wage from \$36 to \$83 a month.

S. Africans enter all-white school

Fifteen Black students entered the formerly all-white Potgietersrus elementary school for classes February 22 after a South African provincial government ordered the school to end its racist admission policy. In January, some Afrikaner parents forced away three Black children who tried to attend the school; these forces are now organizing a school boycott.

Potgietersrus, an elementary school with modern facilities, highlighted the privileges of the country's Afrikaner minority — a mere 3 percent of the population. According to the *New York Times*, the school is "a far cry from the rundown barracks the country's former apartheid Government provided for blacks." "In my mind these kids should be here. It's about time," a Potgietersrus teacher told the *Times*.

Miners strike in Poland

Workers at seven mines at the state-owned coal conglomerate Rybnicka Spolka Weglowa went on strike February 12. They joined workers at eight mines who began a strike over wages the previous week.

Paris proposes cuts in military

French president Jacques Chirac announced February 22 that France's military personnel of 500,000 would be reduced to 350,000 men and women by 2002. Chirac also said the armed forces would become an all-volunteer force by that time, proposing a "major national debate" on abolishing the draft.

Chirac said the changes make the military more flexible and mobile to enable the Elysée Palace to use military might "wherever French interests are threatened" and without U.S. help. Pierre Lel-



Wreckage caused by two suicide bombers who detonated bombs February 25 in Jerusalem and Ashkelon, killing 27 people, including themselves. Many Palestinians said the attack was provoked by the assassination of Yahya Ayyash, a member of the Palestinian group Hamas. Ayyash was killed January 5 by a booby-trapped mobile phone probably planted by Israeli agents.

louche, a member of Parliament, complained that Paris lagged behind its British rivals in responding with military force in the Persian Gulf War. "The truth is that we do not have an all-volunteer intervention force that is up to our diplomatic ambitions," he told *Le Figaro*, a daily newspaper.

Major oil spill near Wales

The oil tanker *Sea Empress* crashed off the coast of Wales February 15, spewing 65,000 tons of crude oil that created a 25-mile slick. Salvage experts at a February 21 news conference said 19 million gallons were spilled into the sea — 8 million more than the *Exxon Valdez* spilled in Alaska's Prince William Sound in 1989.

Environmentalists and opposition Labour Party leaders in London condemned the British government's slow re-

sponse to the accident and said it ignored a 1994 recommendation to provide powerful tugboats near crucial oil ports in case of disasters. "This spillage should never have happened," said Paul Horsman, head of the oil campaign of the environmental group Greenpeace.

Israeli warplanes bomb Lebanon

Two Israeli jets fired 10 rockets on the southern Lebanon villages of Louiseh, Jabal Safi, and Ain Bouswar February 22. The assault was Tel Aviv's second air raid in two days and its third attack in Lebanon this year.

The February 22 morning raid came less than 12 hours after Israeli warplanes launched 10 rockets on the same province. Shiite Muslims in the Hezbollah group have been fighting to force the Israeli military from a self-proclaimed security zone it has been occupying since 1985.

S. Korean generals arrested

Three former generals were arrested in South Korea February 22 for their role in the 1980 Kwangju massacre, where at least 240 people were killed and 1,800 wounded. Fourteen former generals, including two former presidents, have now been arrested on charges related to the brutal military crackdown.

The three former officers, also accused of conspiring to stage a coup in 1979, were shipped off to prisons outside Seoul after a court approved their arrest warrants. A special law was enacted by the South Korean National Assembly in De-

cember to prosecute those involved in the massacre and coup.

Farrakhan ends world tour

Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan wound up a 20-nation tour February 22 that included meetings in Iran, Iraq, Libya, Nigeria, Sudan, and South Africa. He spoke at a rally commemorating the 17th anniversary of the Iranian revolution that overthrew the U.S.-backed shah of Iran. The U.S. Treasury Department threatened Farrakhan with an investigation after Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi allegedly pledged \$1 billion to Farrakhan. The Libyan government said it made no such offer of money.

The Nation of Islam leader responded to criticism for his support of the Sani Abacha military dictatorship in Nigeria, saying, "I think the Abacha regime should be given a chance to move this country toward democracy." He hinted at playing a role as an emissary for Washington. "I think that America should see me as a great asset, probably the most trusted ambassador, because I can go places where most ambassadors cannot be trusted," Farrakhan said in Tehran.

'Million Man March' in Denver

Jamal X, leader of the Nation of Islam mosque in Denver, announced plans at a February 1 press conference to organize a Million Man March event on April 29 to fill the city's Mile High Stadium with 80,000 people. He said the event will aim to build a coalition of Blacks, Hispanics, Indians, and other oppressed groups to deal with issues like "violence."

Alvertis Simmons, executive director of the Million Man March, said that although whites were welcome at the April gathering, "this is about dealing with issues of men of color." Josh Dillabaugh, a member of the American Indian Movement, and Leroy Lemos, speaking in the name of Chicano students, also participated in the press conference at Salaam Restaurant.

Textile workers squeezed hard

The owners of the apparel and fabrics industries eliminated a total of 141,000 jobs last year — 40 percent of all manufacturing jobs reductions in the United States. "We have lost on the order of 500,000 jobs in apparel in the past 23 years and we will probably lose another 40,000 to 50,000 this year," said Carl Priest, an economist with the American Apparel Manufacturers Association. The combination of capitalist depression and faster machines has wrought financial turmoil for textile workers, while the industry remains a large and profitable sector of the U.S. economy. Textile barons reaped \$1.74 billion profits, or 2.7 percent of sales, in 1994 — half the 5.4 percent profit margin for all manufacturing.

— MAURICE WILLIAMS

Carl-Erik Isacson from Sweden also contributed to this column.

THE MILITANT

Read the facts about Cuba

Working people who read lies in the big-business press about their own struggles begin to be open to consider the evidence that the same forces also lie to them about Cuba. The 'Militant' provides you with the facts about the Cuban revolution every week. Don't miss a single issue!



Havana, Aug. 5, 1995, march in defense of revolution.

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Editor: STEVE CLARK

Business Manager: NAOMI CRAINE

Editorial Staff: Naomi Craine, Hilda Cuzco, Laura Garza, Martin Koppel, Paul Mailhot, Argiris Malapanis, and Maurice Williams.

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Internet: 73311.2720@compuserve.com or: themilitant@igc.apc.org

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100,000 march against austerity plans in Ontario

Protests against unemployment insurance cuts spread in New Brunswick

BY MARY ELLEN MARUS

HAMILTON, Ontario — In one of the largest working-class protests in Canadian history, at least 100,000 people marched through the streets of this predominantly industrial city on Saturday, February 24. They waved union flags and placards, singing and shouting chants opposing the provincial government's austerity package.

Ontario premier Michael Harris has threatened layoffs of tens of thousands of public employees and cuts in social programs — including education, child care, health care, welfare, and workers' compensation.

The Saturday demonstration overshadowed the 25,000-strong rally here the day before, which was nevertheless much larger than the December 11 labor demonstration of 15,000 in London, Ontario.

"I love this," said John Fidalgo, a pipe fitter, who was watching the Friday march with other construction workers waiting for their contingent to arrive. "But we have to go farther. We have to have a general strike to shut down the province, at least for one day." He said that construction workers have been hit hard by government cuts and that the Tories (the conservative governing party) "are out to destroy the unions."

The Ontario Federation of Labour has vowed to hold similar actions in one city after another, laying the basis for a province-wide protest against the government's attacks on working people.

Speaking at a Conservative Party policy conference in Hamilton the same weekend, the Ontario premier claimed his government was not going to back down. "Outside today there are a few people who are trying to shake our resolve," Harris said. "No special interest group or lobby will stop us. No union-led demonstration will deter us." Hundreds of heavily armed riot cops lined the halls, guarding the ballroom where Harris spoke.

Meanwhile the protest movement gained momentum as 55,000 government workers, members of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU), went on strike at midnight Sunday, February 25, following the labor march.

Workers are protesting government threats to lay off between 13,000 and 27,000 public employees, in many cases contracting out their jobs to private companies. New bills passed by the provincial

legislature deny these unionists the same job protection and pension rights as other workers.

Under the new labor law, Bill 7, "successor rights" have been abolished. As a result government workers will no longer have a right to jobs that are privatized by the government. Moreover, if they are offered jobs with the private company, they will no longer be guaranteed union protection or their previous wage rate. Government officials argue that the ability to pay lower wages is key to attracting businesses to bid on the purchase of social services.

The laid-off workers will also lose existing pension rights. Under Ontario law, people who lose their jobs as a result of a major reduction in the workforce can, in most cases, continue to earn pension credits until retirement age. Bill 26, the government's omnibus legislation, specifically exempted Ontario government workers from such protection.

In addition, Bill 7 abolished Ontario's anti-scab legislation. The government now has the legal right to use replacement workers in an effort to break a walkout.

The key issue in the current OPSEU strike is the fight for jobs and union rights. At the Hamilton action hundreds of protesters chanted the OPSEU slogan, "No justice, No peace!"

1,400 buses pour into Hamilton

As many as 1,400 buses from across the province brought supporters into Hamilton, known as Steeltown, located in the industrial belt in southern Ontario just west of Toronto. The crowd on February 24 was made up mostly of union members. But substantial numbers of unemployed and unorganized workers, students, activists in a variety of social protest groups, and others joined in. Many workers brought their entire families to the mobilization.

The largest group were teachers, with 650 buses bringing members from all six teachers' unions. One busload of teachers left Blind River in northern Ontario at 2:00 a.m. to get to the rally, while another 15 buses traveled seven hours from Ottawa. Many teachers said that the \$400 million worth of education cuts that the Tory government is trying to impose will wreak havoc on the school system.

"I'm at the lowest salary range," said a grade-two teacher, "and I spend half my

salary on supplies for the students since the school doesn't provide books and the government says we're overpaid!" The cuts would increase her class size from 25 to 45, she stated.

Hundreds of teachers and high school students joined the protest the day before. "We're tired of being stepped on," said Jackie Turk, from the University of Guelph.

Tulula, a grade-nine student from Harbord Collegiate in Toronto, said, "I don't think it's fair that our future should be decided in the government boardrooms while our classes are growing bigger and bigger and education is getting poorer and poorer."

Some 500 nurses joined the two-day protest. Kathy Smith, an official for the Ontario Nurses Association, said many nurses are concerned "not about jobs, but about patient care."

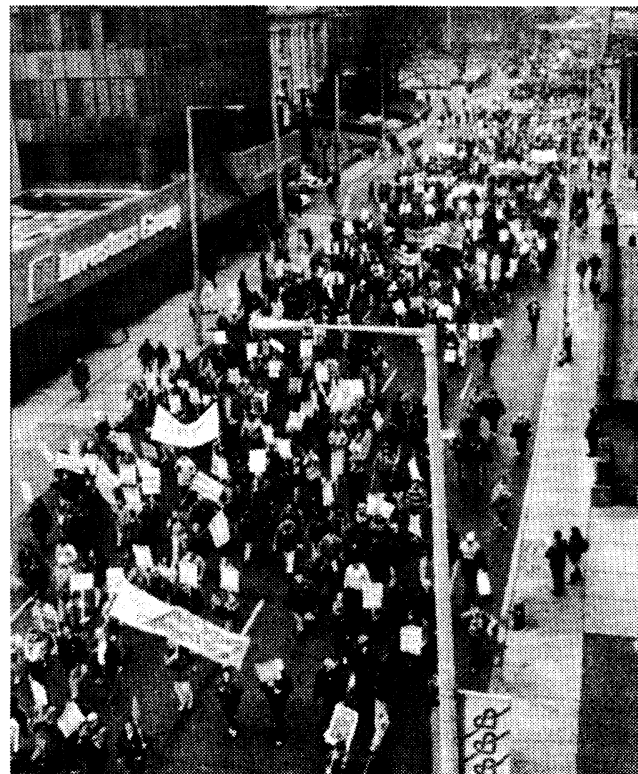
The Friday protest paralyzed services, shut down the transportation system, and idled thousands of workers. Apart from demonstrators, downtown Hamilton was like a ghost town.

While 25,000 demonstrated, 3,000 pickets shut down plants and offices across the region. Major companies like Westinghouse, Wabco, and Hickson-Lang were forced to close as workers refused to cross the picket lines set up by other unionists. Camco, a large appliance maker, shut down at midnight when its 850 employees decided not to cross the picket line.

At National Steel Car so many of the 3,000 workers asked for the day off the company was forced to close. Workers at the big Stelco steelworks negotiated a union holiday to ensure the plant did not function on February 23. The Canadian Auto Workers shut 15 plants. The protest stopped mail delivery in the region as picket lines at the huge Stoney Creek sorting center kept workers out.

BY ROGER ANNIS

BATHURST, New Brunswick — Chanting "Solidarity, justice, dignity" and "Jobs, not cuts," 2,500 workers marched



Over 20,000 people rallied February 23, first day of protests, in Hamilton, Ontario, against layoffs and government cuts in social programs.

through this small city on February 25 to protest proposed cuts to unemployment insurance by the Canadian government.

"We refuse to accept these cuts," said paperworker Edouard Lévesque from the neighboring town of Dalhousie. "The industries in this area have cut so many jobs lately, how are we going to survive?"

"What we want is jobs," said Jean-Guy Savoie, a construction worker now enrolled in a retraining course in Bathurst. "We wouldn't need unemployment insurance if the government and the companies did something to create jobs." This was a view expressed by many protesters.

Most demonstrators came from across northern New Brunswick. Many were Acadians, a French-speaking oppressed nationality who make up the majority of the population in that part of the province.

The march was the latest action of a movement against unemployment insurance cuts that is spreading across the Gaspé region of Quebec and the four provinces of Atlantic Canada. The most recent rallies drew more than 2,500 on February 5 in Tracadie, near Bathurst; some 3,000 across Gaspé February 9; 2,000 in St. John's, Newfoundland, and 500 in Souris, Prince Edward Island, February 12; and 5,000 on February 18 in Sydney, Nova Scotia.

Many protesters here were fresh from rallies two days earlier in nearby Kedgwick, St. Quentin, and Edmundston that drew nearly 2,000 people.

The proposed cuts will hurt more some of the most vulnerable workers in Canada, namely those working in seasonal industries. In eastern Quebec and Atlantic Canada, several main industries are seasonal. They include fishing, logging, construction, agriculture, and tourism. Only one in four of those employed in northern New Brunswick has a year-round job.

The recently announced cuts, if implemented, would follow two previous rounds in 1990 and 1993 that have reduced benefit payments by billions of dollars. As a result, last year only 35 percent of the unemployed in Ontario — Canada's most industrialized province — received jobless benefits, compared to 68 percent in 1991.

The current protests are the first sustained actions against unemployment insurance reductions. Capitalist politicians and big business in New Brunswick have launched attacks against the movement, labeling organizers as "professional agitators."

But the mobilizations continue. Another protest is planned in the Restigouche region of northern New Brunswick in the coming weeks. "We will bring together coalitions in New Brunswick and the Gaspé for this one," said Florian Lévesque in an interview. He is with the group called Future Homeless of Restigouche.

"This rally will be about unity," he stated. "We will bring together Acadians and anglophones from New Brunswick, Quebecois from Gaspé, and Native Indians. The government tries to divide us. We have to unite."

Roger Annis is a member of the Communications, Energy, and Paperworkers Union of Canada Local 841 in Montreal.

Thousands of students protest in Utah

BY JOHN LANGFORD AND JOELLYN MANVILLE

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah — Thousands of high school and middle school students walked out of classes and took to the streets here Friday, February 23, to protest a school board decision to ban all extra-curricular school clubs. The board had enacted the measure three days earlier as a way to bar the recently formed Gay-Straight Alliance student group. The fight has drawn national attention.

At East High School, hundreds of students rallied across the street from the school chanting "we will fight for our rights" for some time before going back to class. Some 1,500 students walked out at West High School, and hundreds of them marched to the state capitol building and held a rally there. Youth at Northwest and Bryant middle schools also joined in some of the protests.

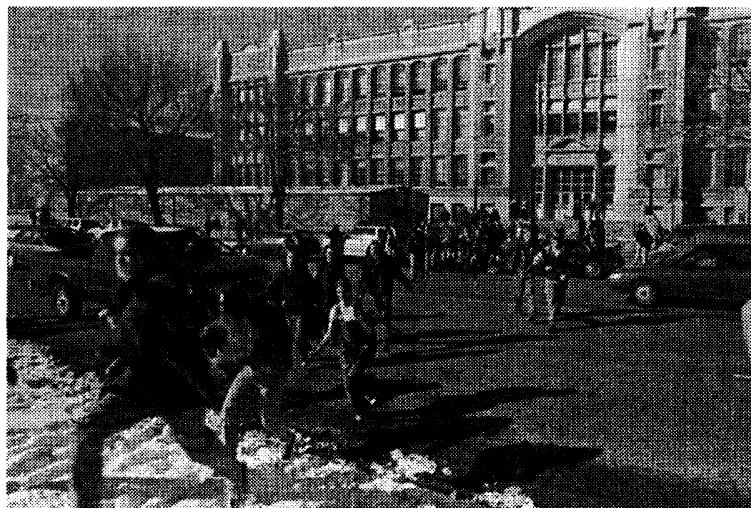
While most students expressed outrage at the club ban, and many support the right of the Gay-Straight Alliance to exist, a few students held up a sign reading, "SAFE — Students Against Faggots at East."

Earlier in the week, 120 supporters of democratic rights for gays, most of them students, marched from Liberty Park to the Salt Lake City District School Board meeting. About 100 speakers from the packed floor addressed the school board for one minute each, most of them to speak against the proposed ban on clubs.

Pat Reynolds, a West High student, complained that the board had "a moral vendetta against one certain club. It also has no respect for our opinions or what we believe in."

Trever Dreyer, West High student body president, asked that the board "not eliminate the clubs, whether we agree with the East High Gay-Straight Alliance." The board voted 4-3 to ban the clubs, though.

The day before the walkout, the state senate approved a bill barring teachers and school employees from "promoting illegal activities" both on and off the job. State Senator Lyle Hillyard argued during the debate that "you give up some of your freedoms when you sign that contract and go to work." Activists have denounced the bill as a way of preventing clubs such as the gay rights group from gaining teachers' support, and as a general attack on free speech.



Hundreds of students walked out of East Lake High School in Salt Lake City, Utah, February 23 protesting ban on school clubs.

The Citizens Alliance for Hate Free Schools has called a demonstration for Saturday, March 2. Protesters will gather at the federal building in downtown Salt Lake City at noon, and then march to the Capitol for a rally there. Endorsers of the march include the National Organization for Women and the American Civil Liberties Union.

John Langford is a member of the United Steelworkers of America; Joellyn Manville is a member of the Young Socialists and the East High Gay-Straight Alliance.

Report back from Havana book fair

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

NEW YORK — More than 250 people heard a firsthand report here February 25 from the recent Seventh International Havana Book Fair and celebrated the publication of the new Pathfinder book *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War: 1956-58*, by Ernesto Che Guevara. The event took place just one day after pilots from Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces shot down two planes flown by a group of counterrevolutionaries from the United States who had ignored all previous warnings and once again sent belligerent planes into Cuba's airspace.

"It has just gotten a little more difficult to recruit pilots in the United States to fly hostile missions over Cuba," said keynote speaker Mary-Alice Waters, editor of *Episodes* and of the Marxist magazine *New International*, at the opening of the meeting. She pointed out that this action by the Cuban government in defense of its sovereignty was a blow to Washington's 37-year-long efforts to weaken, divide, and ultimately overthrow the government and communist leadership in Cuba. "Washington just got a sharp reminder: the Cuban revolution is alive and well. And fighters everywhere feel stronger," she said.

"Nothing else could underscore more dramatically the importance of the theme we're discussing today," said Waters. This theme, she explained, is that *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War* "is not just an account of historic events — however important those chapters of history are — but first and foremost a political weapon for today's fighters."

The meeting, held at Columbia University, was sponsored by the Militant Labor Forum in New York, Brooklyn, and Newark, New Jersey. Those attending came from around the Northeast and mid-Atlantic region. Also present were many participants attending a national leadership conference of the Socialist Workers Party, as well as leaders of the Young Socialists from across the country who held a meeting that evening. Greg McCartan, editorial director of Pathfinder, chaired the event.

Pathfinder published *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War*, Waters told the audience, "because it is needed, especially by the generations that did not live through these events and who are seeking to understand the world we live in today. Most importantly, however, it is needed by fighters who want to learn how to fight — and win." Guevara's account of the battles and mass struggles that led to the victory of the Cuban revolution shows "how ordinary men and women are capable of transforming themselves as they fight to change the world."

'Not a question of courage alone'

What allowed the Cuban workers and farmers in the Rebel Army to lead a successful revolutionary struggle, said Waters, "was not a question of courage alone," although *Episodes* recounts many instances of great courage. "These were not men and women who thought they were being courageous in what they did. It wasn't a question of guts, but of political understanding and capacity to fight and to lead others to fight."

Before and after the meeting, many members of the audience looked at an attractive display of photos depicting the years before and after Cuba's revolutionary victory in January 1959. Among them were dramatic photos of Rebel Army combatants, workers demanding weapons to defend the revolution, and mounted peasant militias riding into action.

The most commonly asked question by those who were drawn to the books in the Pathfinder exhibit at the fair, Waters reported, was: Isn't it hard to be a communist in the United States and other imperialist countries? "Our reply was: It's no harder than in Cuba; we're in the same trench and the same struggle," she added. What helped the volunteers staffing the Pathfinder booth answer this question was a photo display illustrating where and how Pathfinder literature is sold in cities around the world.

The class struggle in the capitalist

world," Waters pointed out, "is the hardest thing for revolutionary fighters in Cuba to see, and that's why the presence there of revolutionary fighters from elsewhere in the world was so important."

Hundreds of people streamed into the Pathfinder booth to talk with communists from other countries about the experiences they are living through and the political struggles they are involved in — from the pro-independence upsurge in Quebec, to the workers' struggles in France, to the protests demanding freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal, unjustly convicted and sentenced to death in the United States.

Seated next to Waters at the Columbia meeting were several other members of the international team that staffed the Pathfinder stand and reported for the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* at the Havana Book Fair. They were Carlos Cornejo, a student in Montreal, Quebec; *Perspectiva Mundial* staff writer Róger Calero; Linda Harris, a worker at an air conditioner factory and Pathfinder volunteer from Sydney, Australia; Brian Taylor, an airline worker in Washington, D.C., who is also a *Militant* correspondent in the capital; Seth Galinsky, a rail worker in Miami and regular *Militant* correspondent in south Florida; and *Perspectiva Mundial* editor Martín Koppel.

Commonality of experiences

Waters noted, however, that compared to the other four times Pathfinder has been present at the Havana Book Fair since 1988, "this time our experiences in struggle came much closer to the experiences Cubans are living through. As a consequence, our political discussions had greater depth." This was also due to the fact that more of those who visited the Pathfinder stand had previously read books published and distributed by Pathfinder, from "The Opening Guns of World War III" in the magazine *Nueva Internacional*, to speeches by Malcolm X, to books by communist leaders like Leon Trotsky and James P. Cannon.

"It was really impressive how many people came to the stand to ask about Mark Curtis and get the latest information on the fight to get him out of jail," Waters noted. Curtis, a framed-up political and union fighter, has been in prison in Iowa for seven years. He was granted parole in November, but is still behind bars.

"This greater commonality of experiences is born of the fact that, since the beginning of the 'special period', the people of Cuba have found themselves, overnight, brutally thrust into the world capitalist market to a greater degree than anytime in the last three decades," said Waters. The special period is what Cubans call the economic crisis precipitated by the disruption of trade at preferential prices and aid from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. "This has been a savage, wrenching transition, made worse by the economic chokehold applied by Washington."

"Many in Cuba thought at first that their problems stemmed not from capitalism but from the failure of socialism — as they saw it — in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. But their experiences of the past five years have allowed them to bypass many of these first impressions."

Waters noted, "It's easier now to explain to fighters in Cuba the reality that workers in the imperialist countries face today, the depression conditions of world capitalism — the declining wages, the deterioration of working conditions, the brutality of the pace of work. Cubans are getting more than a taste of the dehumanizing character of social relations under capitalism through their exposure to the growing foreign investment in their country and other effects of the capitalist market, all things they are obliged to accept to get production going again."

As a result, they can understand better the impact of cuts in health and education spending in the United States and elsewhere, the scapegoating of immigrants, the rise of fascist currents, and the grow-



People attending report back from Havana book fair check out the photo exhibits and books for sale. Mary-Alice Waters (inset), editor of Guevara's *Episodes*, was the featured speaker.

ing threats of war in a capitalist world dominated by sharpening interimperialist conflicts.

Two or three years ago, Waters said, virtually everyone in Cuba spoke about what they called the "unipolar world," reflecting the view that, since the crumbling of the Soviet regime, U.S. imperialism had become stronger and more dominant. Now, however, it's increasingly common to hear, as one revolutionary fighter who visited the Pathfinder booth put it, that "it seems like no one is in control anymore in the world."

At the same time, many working people and other supporters of the revolution in Cuba are conscious that they are stronger as a result of successfully resisting the effects of the economic crisis over the past six years.

Waters explained that this working-class confidence was evident at several factory meetings in the Havana region that members of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* reporting team attended and two farm cooperatives they visited. In the factory assemblies, workers were discussing a written document in preparation for the April congress of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC).

"There was real debate and discussion," she said, on a range of questions, from world politics today, to wage levels, to the sugar harvest, to the armed defense of the revolution.

Waters noted that the most acute phase of the economic crisis of the last five years is over. "There is more life in the streets now than anytime since 1991," she reported, pointing to the increased traffic, open shops, and sidewalk food stands. "Food is more available now in the capital, including lettuce and other fresh produce for the first time in several years, although it is still expensive."

The experiences and strength that working people have gained were reflected in the greater breadth of books and political discussions that people sought out at the book fair this year, Waters reported. This time the two most popular titles were *Habla Malcolm X* (Malcolm X Speaks) and the *History of the Russian Revolution* by Leon Trotsky. "Day after day, we would see the Cuban version of Pathfinder's 'Readers Club' — the young people and others who just sat and read for hours at the booth," she said.

Impact of 'Episodes'

The Pathfinder book that had the biggest impact at the Havana Book Fair this year, Waters said, was *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War*. The book was presented during the fair at a joint launching with *Pombo: un hombre de la guerrilla del Che* (Pombo: A Man of Che's Guerrilla), written by Brig. Gen. Harry Villegas and published by Editora Política in Havana.

This title is based on the diary kept by Villegas, also known as Pombo, in 1966-68, during the Bolivian guerrilla campaign he fought in under Guevara's command. Copies of that book, which will be published in English by Pathfinder later this year, were also sold at the Columbia University meeting.

Waters noted that Pathfinder's publication of *Episodes* drew attention at the fair because of the high quality of the book — from the translation and printing to the fact that it is the most complete edition in English. But what sparked the most interest — and controversy — was where the book was being sold.

At the meeting to launch the book, Waters reported, "We explained that this book was going to be sold to workers in factories and on the picket lines, to students on campuses, to farmers, immigrant workers, and others. Afterward, a number of participants came to the Pathfinder booth and asked us, 'Do you really mean workers on picket lines will buy this book?' When we said, 'Yes, that's what we mean and that's what's already happening,' you could see the impact it had on them. Their view of the world today, and the place of the Cuban revolution in it, suddenly shifted."

Waters underlined that the political conditions in capitalist countries are leading working-class fighters to become more open to learning about the Cuban revolution. "When they see that Cuba is hated by the same people they themselves are learning to despise," she noted, "these fighters become open to consider the evidence that they've been lied to. But they need evidence, not empty rhetoric. And that's what we provide." They become interested in finding out how revolutionary Cuba has been able to stand up steadfastly to imperialism for all these decades, and books like Guevara's *Episodes* help explain this.

At the meeting where Waters spoke, a number of workers and young people had already purchased *Episodes* or got it at the event. Kim Hilaire, a 25-year-old auto worker at General Motors' Tarrytown plant, for example, had recently bought the book from a co-worker and begun reading it. Hilaire became interested in Cuba after reading Malcolm X, who "pointed out how the Cubans were the only ones who helped in our struggle, the Black struggle," she said.

Waters ended by explaining that the books exhibited at the Havana Book Fair had been donated to the University of Santa Clara and pointed to several stacks of Pathfinder books next to the podium. "All these will be sent to Cuba in the next days in response to special requests for books," she said. Ranging from materials about Patrick Buchanan to copies of *Nueva Internacional*, the books were requested during the Havana Book Fair by a variety of institutions and individuals — from the Federation of University Students, to several embassies, to a number of libraries, including the library of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Cuba.

Maggie Trowe, business manager of the printshop that produces Pathfinder's books, concluded the meeting with an appeal for contributions to the Books for Cuba Fund. It is through this fund that working people and students in the United States and elsewhere make such donations of books to Cuba possible.

Participants at the meeting contributed or made pledges to the Books for Cuba Fund totaling \$3,615.

YS leaders: 'To the streets to defend Cuba'

BY JOHN EVENHUIS
AND LAURA GARZA

NEW YORK — Leaders of the Young Socialists (YS) came out of a national meeting here ready to build the organization's Minneapolis convention and conference, set for April 6-7.

"We are going to build our convention by getting out into the streets to defend the Cuban revolution, joining with those protesting the ultrarightist Patrick Buchanan, meeting workers on picket lines and rallies, and building demonstrations in support of affirmative action, women's rights," said YS leader Diana Newberry.

Members of the YS National Committee, as well as elected delegates from 13 chapters of the youth organization across the United States participated in the meeting. These included Boston; Bloomington, Indiana; Des Moines, Iowa; Chicago; Miami; New York; Philadelphia; Los Angeles; San Francisco; St. Paul, Minnesota; and Washington, D.C. Two representatives from the Socialist Workers Party were invited, as were two leaders of the St. Paul branch of the party.

A statement on political principles, campaigns, rules of the organization, and election of delegates to the convention was adopted and placed before the membership for discussion over the next weeks. Prior to the convention chapters will elect delegates based on the decisions of the national leadership meeting. (see the YS principles on this page).

The YS is a young organization, Newberry noted, founded in August 1994. Since then, chapters have participated in many common activities. "We're now in a position to discuss more concretely who the Young Socialists are, and what our principles are," she said. The members will discuss this over the next month.

The youth leaders began their work by participating in a public forum to hear a report from the Havana Book Fair. More than 250 people packed the Earl Hall auditorium at Columbia University in Manhattan to hear Mary-Alice Waters and meet and speak with several *Militant* reporters who attended the fair in Cuba. Waters is the editor of Ernesto Che Guevara's *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War*.

Moving into action in the streets along with students, young workers, and other activists to defend Cuba against Washington's hostile actions is an immediate task for all YS members, Newberry said.

She noted that the attacks on Cuba come at a time of increasing political polarization, as shown by the Republican Party primaries.

"Patrick Buchanan is not just another right-winger," said Newberry. While he talks anti-big business, he advances ideas aimed at dividing the working class to save capitalism from its decline. "He's not



Militant/Lisa Alhberg
YS members picket outside federal building in Seattle, February 27. More than 100 people took part in protest.

just after votes, but is assembling a cadre," she said, "that will be the basis of a fascist movement." Newberry said the YS will join with other fighters in protests and counterdemonstrations to oppose

voted that there would be one delegate for every two chapter members. A chapter consists of three or more YS members who collaborate in their work. The 1-to-2 ratio, several YS leaders said, would allow

"Buchanan, who really shows a face of what American fascism is."

The meeting also voted to respond to the attempts by the Iowa and Illinois prison authorities to delay parole for Mark Curtis, a political activist framed up in Des Moines, Iowa. YS members voted to write letters to the jailed political activist, granted parole in November, as one way of alerting the authorities to the fact that their actions are being watched and that supporters of Curtis will respond to any attempts to prolong his imprisonment.

Following the meeting at Columbia University, the Young Socialists decided to join with the Socialist Workers Party in a campaign to sell and distribute, as widely as possible, the book *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War*.

YS leaders unanimously decided that the convention will be a delegated meeting with powers to set policy for the organization, elect a National Committee, and decide tasks. After discussion and consideration of different proposals, the meeting participants

for the broadest discussion and most authoritative decision-making powers at the convention. In an area where there are two YS members working jointly, they can elect a delegate who will have voice and consultative vote, the youth leaders decided. The security policy of the youth group establishes that use of illegal drugs is incompatible with membership, a policy that had already been adopted in order to prevent the government from being able to use drug laws to victimize the youth for their political activities.

"In order to have a successful convention and organizing conference," said Newberry, "it's going to take a collective effort. All members of the Young Socialists can now throw themselves into building the convention through carrying out the campaigns that the YS set for itself. Through that we'll meet young fighters interested in attending the convention and joining the organization."

Participants in the meeting gave examples of the kind of people they seek to bring to the convention. Youth from Boston described young fighters the YS has met who recently joined an abortion rights picket line in front of the courthouse where an antiabortion thug is being tried for murdering two clinic workers.

Another participant, from Washington, D.C., noted recent raids by the immigration cops in Maryland and said the YS must champion the defense of equal rights for immigrant workers.

A fund drive of \$10,000 was extended to March 15. YS leaders reported that much of the money has been pledged and there are plans for fund-raisers, more work is needed to meet the goal.

John Evenhuis is a member of the Young Socialists from Los Angeles.

Principles of the Young Socialists

Political principles

- The Young Socialists recognizes the need to overthrow capitalism and fight for socialism. Since this is an international struggle, we build our organization internationally.

- The YS opposes all forms of exploitation and oppression, including racism, national chauvinism, and sexism. We support all struggles for national liberation and women's emancipation.

- The YS seeks to lead youth in the battles against imperialism's march toward fascism and war.

- The YS looks to the working class and the program and the communist continuity of the Socialist Workers Party as the proletarian party that can lead it to take state power, overthrow capitalism, and join the international struggle for socialism.

- The YS defends Cuba's socialist revolution

and sees it as a living example of the way forward for all of humanity, as the Bolshevik-led October 1917 Russian revolution was earlier this century. Our goal is to emulate the Cuban revolution in the U.S. and internationally.

Campaigns

The YS opposes the imperialist drive toward war against Yugoslavia and will use any opportunity to explain the truth about Yugoslavia and the crisis that imperialism faces today.

The YS understands that Patrick Buchanan's movement represents the true face of American fascism. We will join with other fighters in protests and counterdemonstrations to oppose Buchananism.

In defending Cuba, the YS will work with others to:

- build the tour of Cuban youth who have been invited to speak at U.S. universities in April;

- build and help lead the U.S.-Cuba Youth Exchange sponsored by the National Network on Cuba and scheduled for July 24-August 5;

- and actively work with the Union of Young Communists (UJC) in Cuba and other youth organizations around the world to build the world festival of students and youth to be held in Havana in 1997.

The YS rejects any support to the parties of big business and will campaign for the Socialist Workers Party candidates in 1996.

We join with all resistance to the horrors of capitalism, including joining picket lines of striking workers, abortion rights actions and clinic defense, protests against police brutality and the death penalty, mobilizations to defend affirmative action and equal rights for immigrants, protests against the destruction of the environment, protests against education cuts and others. We go to this resistance and these protests armed with our political weapons, the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, *New International*, and Pathfinder books and pamphlets.

YS members strive to study the lessons of past working-class struggles and trace our political continuity to the founding document of sci-

entific socialism — the *Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels.

Election of delegates

A convention is a delegated meeting with powers to set policy for the organization, elect a National Committee, and decide tasks. A delegated convention allows for more democratic discussion, airing of different views, and authoritative decision-making than is possible with a national membership meeting.

Delegates to the YS convention will be elected on the basis of the political principles, rules of membership and discipline, security policy, YS-SWP relations, and campaigns.

Delegates will have voice and decisive vote at the convention. Members of the outgoing National Committee, if not elected as delegates, will be delegates with voice and consultative vote.

Members voting and nominated for delegate must be in good standing (owing less than three months in dues).

Young Socialists support Cuba's right to defend its sovereignty

The Young Socialists gives unconditional support to Cuba's right to defend its sovereignty and territory against imperialism and its agents. We condemn the attempts by Washington to further smear the Cuban revolution and step up its aggression. By shooting down the pirate planes, the Cuban government and people have told the warlords to the north they cannot act with impunity against workers, revolutionary movements, and oppressed peoples throughout the world.

Members of the Young Socialists are joining with others and putting every effort into building picket lines and protest actions in defense of Cuba, its sovereignty, and its socialist revolution. We know that many young people here in the United States — youth who, for our entire lives, have known only wars, racism, and sexism by the employers and their twin parties and their government — will join in these actions to show solidarity with those standing up to attack by a common enemy. Others will be open to considering the facts about a people and a revolution that has resisted in the face of enormous military, economic, and political pressure

from the most powerful and violent government on the face of the earth.

It is only with the most two-faced hypocrisy that Washington can pretend to be the protector of democratic rights and "peace." It is Washington that has led massive wars against the Korean people and against the workers and farmers of Vietnam. It is Washington that attempted invasion of Cuba, backed of the apartheid regime in South Africa, prosecuted the contra war in Nicaragua, and organized the brutal bombing of Iraq and the massacre of Iraqi workers and peasants in uniform. And it is the U.S. government that is pressing the current war preparations against Yugoslavia, and carrying out military threats against China.

In drawing a line, Cuba has acted on behalf of workers and fighters everywhere: it has once against shown that the wealthy rulers' offensive will be met with resistance.

The Young Socialists demand:
Stop U.S. military provocations against Cuba!

Normalize relations with Cuba now!
End the threats, lift the embargo!
End the U.S. travel ban!

Come to the

**Young Socialists First
National Convention and
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April 6-7

Minneapolis, Minnesota

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☐ I am interested in attending the YS convention

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The Rebel Army triumph in Santa Clara

Pathfinder Press recently released a new edition of Ernesto Che Guevara's *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War: 1956-58*.

To promote this book, the *Militant* is running this series, featuring articles by and about combatants of the July 26 Movement and the Rebel Army, which led the revolutionary war that overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista and opened the socialist revolution in the Americas.

This week's installment — the seventh — is on the battle of Santa Clara, one of the most decisive actions of the war. Santa Clara, Cuba's third largest city and the capital of Las Villas province, was attacked Dec. 29, 1958, by 300 Rebel Army troops under the command of Ernesto Che Guevara, opposed by an enemy force ten times bigger. The rebel forces, however, were aided by the city's population who hampered the movement of the army's tanks and armored vehicles by clogging up all the streets with parked cars.

By the early morning hours of Jan. 1, 1959, Rebel Army troops controlled the entire city except the main army garrison. Early that day Batista fled Cuba, ceding power to a military junta led by Gen. Eulogio Cantillo.

The account below describes the surrender of Santa Clara that day. The author was a captain in Guevara's Rebel Army Column no. 8. An internationally known geographer and cave specialist prior to the revolution, Antonio Núñez Jiménez has held a number of posts since 1959, including executive di-



Institute of Cuban History

Che Guevara addressing Rebel Army in Santa Clara, Dec. 28, 1958-Jan. 1, 1959.

rector of the National Institute of Agrarian Reform, president of the Academy of Sciences, vice minister of culture, and ambassador to Peru.

BY ANTONIO NÚÑEZ JIMÉNEZ

After a prolonged discussion in which the evidence of our superior position and the demoralization of the dictatorship's army were both important factors, the officers [of Batista's army] agreed to surrender when we stated that we would be willing to let the soldiers and officers who resided in Santa Clara go home—once they had turned in their weapons—and that they would be given safe-conduct from us. It was understood that their records would later be examined to ascertain whether any of them were guilty of crimes or torture. Those living outside Santa Clara would be transported to Caibarién, where they could leave by boat for their respective homes.

Just when the surrender was about to be made official, Major Fernández stepped forward on behalf of all those who were congregated there and asked if we would allow him, as a delegate of all the officers, to speak personally with Che. Knowing that this officer was unaware of Che's character, we accepted his proposal, reiterating that if the surrender did not go into effect by 12:15 p.m., we would resume fire.

The officers consented to having Major Fernández represent them and he came with us. We left the Leoncio Vidal Garrison amid shouts from the officers expressing their almost unanimous desire to end the battle.

Major Fernández walked between the two of us, both officers of the Rebel Army. The enemy soldiers opened the heavy iron door. Outside, an automobile driven by Lieutenant Ríos was waiting for us. The people who saw us go by greeted us with shouts of "Long live the revolution!" "Death to the tyranny!" and "Down with tyranny!" The high-ranking Batista officer lowered his head, as if ashamed, confronted with the first sight of a rebel people giving free rein to their genuine feelings. The scene was indescribable — thousands of men and women, many of them with Cuban flags and the flags of the July 26 movement, shouting out with burning enthusiasm. And amid this sea of people our car passed through, bearing a white flag. The crowd cooperated and opened a small passageway among them. Occasionally a car or truck blocking our path had to be moved, so that we could reach the building of the Third District of the Ministry of Public Works, where Che was waiting for us.

Upon arriving at Rebel Command, we made our way through, bringing the officer to a small room filled with rifles and ammunition captured from the enemy. Present were Che, [Adolfo] Rodríguez de la Vega, Major Fernández, and the author of these lines.

The officer of the government's army tried to convince Che that he should extend the truce...that in Havana a provisional government had been formed...that General Cantillo...and so on and so forth.

Che listened to him without batting an eye. Leaning back in his chair, he looked steadily at the enemy officer. He stuck a tiny cigar butt into his mouth, which he had to do with his fingertips, while moving his arm — which was in a cast — with difficulty. The cigar smoke drifted slowly upward, partially covering his face and leaving only the ridges of his brows showing.

"Look, Major, my assistants already spoke for this Command. The question is either unconditional surrender or we open fire—but true fire, without any truce. The city is already in our hands."

The enemy officer Fernández tried to stammer a few words about prolonging the fight. Raising his voice, Che told him:

"At 12:30, I will give the order to resume the attack with all our forces and we will take the garrison at all costs. The responsibility for bloodshed will be on you."

He then spit out the following words:

"Furthermore, you should know that there is a possibility that the United

States government will intervene militarily in Cuba and if that happens, your crime will be worse because you will have supported a foreign invader. In that case, nothing will be left for us to do except give you a pistol to shoot yourselves with, since you would be guilty of a conscious act of high treason against Cuba."

Upon hearing these last words from Commander Ernesto Guevara, Major Fernández asked to meet once again with Colonel Cándido Hernández and his general staff, and promised to answer Che's proposal before 12:30 p.m.

We accompanied Major Fernández back to the Leoncio Vidal Garrison.

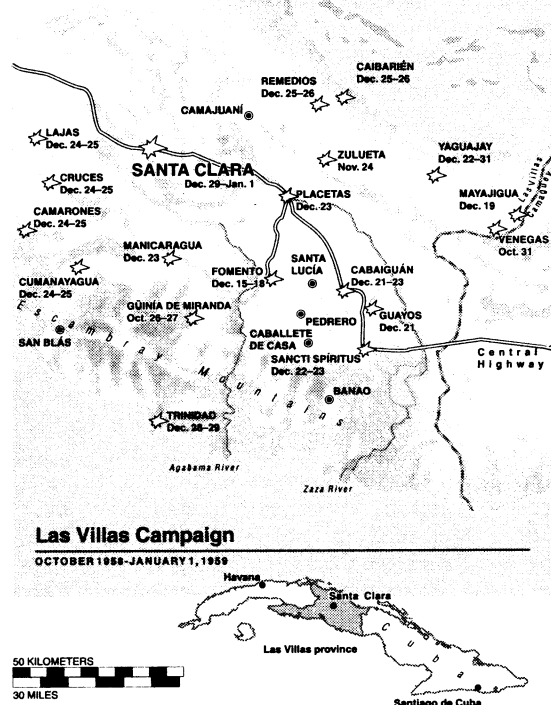
Another meeting with the enemy officers took place. Fernández explained what happened. The officers became restless and began to talk among themselves, consulting one another. We remained quiet, speaking only after a long deep silence:

"Gentlemen, there are only ten minutes left before we resume fire. Commander Guevara already explained that this is the last chance you'll have to save your lives before dying locked up in here, fighting for a lost, unjust cause."

Colonel Hernández stated that all was lost and, sensing the mood of his officers, agreed to the unconditional surrender proposed by Che and stated that he had confidence in the honor of the revolutionary command.

When the municipality of Santa Clara came under the control of the revolutionary forces, not only was a territory of 1,128 square kilometers with 142,176 inhabitants liberated, but this historic fact, combined with the decisive victories of the Rebel Army in Oriente, meant the liberation of the entire central region of Cuba. The surrender of the Third Military District, encompassing the whole province of Las Villas, amounted in practice to the surrender of those parts not yet liberated. This facilitated the surrender of the entire region to the west of the heroic city.

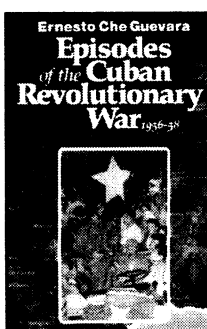
The road to the capital of the republic was left open and Fidel ordered Column 2, under the command of Camilo Cienfuegos, to march on the Columbia military camp, and he ordered Column 8, under the command of Ernesto Che Guevara, to take the La Cabaña fortress in Havana.



rector of the National Institute of Agrarian Reform, president of the Academy of Sciences, vice minister of culture, and ambassador to Peru.

The following is excerpted from an ar-

Special offer from Pathfinder



Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War 1956-58

"Revolutions rarely, if ever, emerge fully ripe, and not all their details are scientifically foreseen. They are products of passion, of improvisation by human beings in their struggle for social change, and are never perfect. Our revolution was no exception."

—ERNESTO CHE GUEVARA, 1961

Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War is a firsthand account of the military battles and political campaigns that culminated in the January 1959 mass armed insurrection that overthrew the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship.

Guevara's *Episodes* shows how he and other Rebel Army combatants were transformed by their experiences into battle-tested leaders of working people in Cuba.

Writing with clarity and humor, he shows how the revolution's social program emerged out of deepening class-struggle experience by workers and peasants themselves. He explains how the Rebel Army and July 26 Movement grew into a movement capable of leading millions to carry through a socialist revolution in the years after the 1959 victory.

Guevara's *Episodes* appears here complete for the first time in English. This new edition contains letters and other documents written by Guevara during the war.

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Cuba Rebels Driven From Santa Clara

4,000 Casualties Reported in City; Batista Troops Pressing Attack

The United States says it will not intervene in the Cuba struggle—Page 10.

Gen. Batista's two young sons on a New York sight-seeing trip—Page 10.

By The Associated Press

HAVANA, Dec. 31.—Government troops, backed by armor and planes, hammered retreating rebel forces around Santa Clara tonight and drove them eastward out of Las Villas Province.

The army said the rebel bid to seize Santa Clara, cut Cuba in two and threaten Havana had been crushed.

As President Fulgencio Batista's army pushed rebel leader Fidel Castro's fighters toward Camaguey and Oriente Provinces, the government called on its forces to keep on fighting until the revolutionary movement is utterly wrecked. A source close to President Batista said:

"There will be no New Year's holiday and no truces or respites for the rebels."

President Batista remained in the Presidential Palace amid reports he hoped to announce a sweeping victory over Castro's insurgents by the dawn of the new year.

A spokesman for the President said the government had

smashed an attempt to seize Santa Clara, capital of Las Villas Province. Earlier reports said the rebels were fighting a rear-guard action in the battered old city.

Santa Clara's streets were described as strewn with dead and wounded. Government informants estimated that 3,000 rebels had been killed or wounded. They indicated government casualties were at least 1,000.

Once rebel forces are pushed into Camaguey, the government expected their flight toward easternmost Oriente Province would gain momentum. Camaguey is the heart of Cuba's flat cattle-raising country where rebels would have little chance against armored forces and air attacks.

Presidential Palace sources emphasized the drive would be intensified once the rebels were pushed into Oriente, to destroy their strongholds there. Insurgents still have the bulk of their forces in Oriente. They have entered or occupied a half dozen cities there and isolated the city of Santiago de Cuba. Some positions were given up by the government to rush reinforcements to Santa Clara. President Batista sent Maj. Gen. Jose Pedraza, known as an iron-fisted fighting man, to

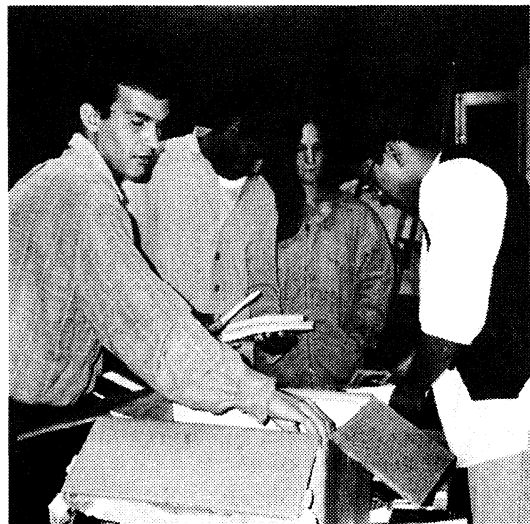
Original text of Associated Press dispatch on the battle of Santa Clara run in U.S. newspapers Jan. 1, 1959.

'There is a need for these books today'

Pathfinder exhibit in Santa Clara, Cuba

BY RÓGER CALERO

SANTA CLARA, Cuba — Pathfinder volunteers who participated in the Seventh International Book Fair in Havana were invited to bring their book exhibit to a computer fair and national youth confer-



Militant/Sigurlaug Gunnlaugsdóttir

Volunteers packing Pathfinder books donated to University of Santa Clara.

ence on computer science, held here February 16-19. The event was organized by the Joven Club (Youth Club), a project that promotes computer use among youth in Cuba.

The Joven Club was initiated in 1993 by the Union of Young Communists (UJC) of Cuba and today has 156 local centers throughout the country. It has organized a computer network connecting these centers that can also be accessed from abroad. *Juventud Rebelde*, the newspaper of the UJC, is one of the resources available through the network. "This network is used primarily by youth, but some workers, of all ages, are now using it to get computer training too," said Rafael Tamayo, one of the national leaders of the Joven Club.

Members of the Joven Club, like others in Cuba, are using computers to limit the impact of the acute paper shortage in the country. Accelerating computer training and use is part of Cuba's response to the economic crisis — commonly referred to as the special period — precipitated in that country by the collapse of trade and aid from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe at the beginning of the 1990s. It also reflects the efforts by Cuban youth, with full government support, to exchange ideas and information with others around the world.

The youth conference, held here at the Central University of Las Villas, was attended by 150 delegates from Joven Clubs around the country. Students presented computer projects with a variety of scientific applications, and awards were given for a dozen categories. Many, such as an egg incubator one youth had designed, were aimed at increasing efficiency and production. Tamayo said the winners of the contest will participate in the 1996 Computer Science Convention and Fair to be held in March in Havana.

Twelve organizations representing computer software and hardware manufacturers from Cuba and abroad had stands at the computer fair, which was held at the city's cultural center downtown. At least 2,000 people visited the fair.

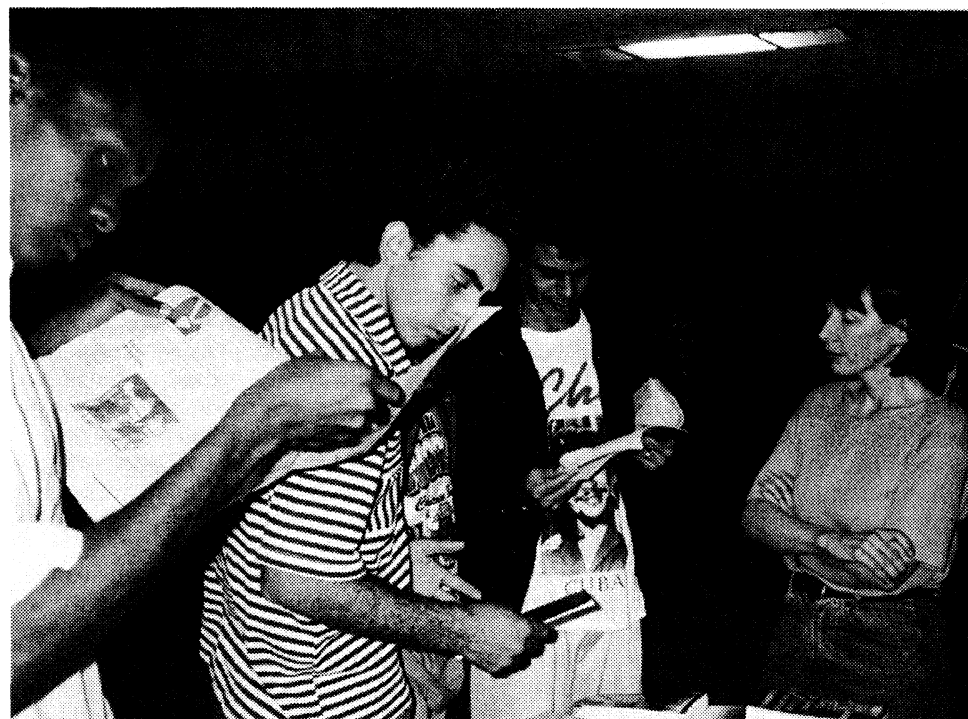
Many expressed great interest in Pathfinder's book exhibit there. Giovanni Guardado, a 24-year-old computer student, was glad to see Pathfinder books in Santa Clara. He had read about the publishing house in the daily newspaper *Granma*, which interviewed Pathfinder president Mary-Alice Waters at the Havana book fair. "Book exhibits like this one are usually done in Havana," he said. "You will find a great appreciation for revolutionary literature in the provinces and in the countryside."

The Pathfinder volunteers had brought a photo display showing communist workers selling revolutionary literature in a number of places and events around the

world, from Los Angeles to Tehran. This sparked considerable interest. Raúl Marchena, who was studying English, was particularly impressed to see the pictures of demonstrations against the anti-immigrant Proposition 187 in California, of the strike by workers at Boeing, and of a rally in defense of Mumia Abu-Jamal. "It is good to know that other workers around the world are also fighting back," he said. He then browsed through a copy of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics*.

Two Nicaraguan youths studying at the University of Santa Clara stayed around to discuss the situation in Nicaragua and to look through an issue of the Marxist magazine *Nueva Internacional* titled "The Rise and Fall of the Nicaraguan Revolution." They have been in Cuba for eight years. On a visit to Nicaragua last year, they said, they were shocked by the social conditions facing working people there today. "We need to go back to the roots of the Nicaraguan revolution and the mistakes that were made there," one of the students said. About 150 Pathfinder titles — more than 200 copies — that were on display, were donated to the three campuses of the Central University of Las Villas.

A philosophy professor at the university who had seen Pathfinder books at a U.S.-Cuban philosophers conference last year asked which of the campus libraries would receive George Novack's *Polemics in Marxist Philosophy*, which he was especially interested in reading. Rafael Soriano from the Municipal



Militant/Róger Calero

Cuban youth browse through socialist books while participating in national computer science conference held in Santa Clara February 15-19.

Book Council said this was a timely donation. "Before the special period we used to look at the world through the prism of the Soviet Union," he said. "Today there is a need for these books in order to look at the whole world and the changes that have taken place."

The new Pathfinder English-language edition of *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War* by Ernesto Che Guevara drew special attention at the fair. Many of the visitors said they had relatives or knew somebody who had joined the Rebel Army in Santa Clara in battles — recounted by Guevara in this book — that were decisive in the overthrow of the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship. Some of the older visitors vividly remembered the atrocities inflicted by the dictatorship.

One young man quickly recognized the picture of a Rebel Army combatant nick-

named Vaquerito, the leader of the "Suicide Squad" in Guevara's Column 8 of the Rebel Army, from one of the photo sections of *Episodes*. "Vaquerito is someone we admire a lot," he said.

At the end of the computer fair and conference, the donation of the Pathfinder books — made possible by the Books for Cuba Fund organized by the Militant — was accepted on behalf of the university center by leaders of the UJC and the Federation of University Students. UJC leader Bolivia Tamara thanked the workers and students in the U.S. and elsewhere whose generous contributions to the fund had made the donation possible, noting that "these books will help us deepen our knowledge about the workers movement around the world." She added that they would organize an exhibit of these titles at each of the university's campuses here.

Socialists campaign to defend Cuba

BY GREG McCARTAN

Members of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists are joining with others to build picket lines and protests to defend Cuba against Washington's latest aggressive actions. Socialist workers have stepped up their discussions on the job, and their efforts to get into the hands of unionists books from Pathfinder that tell the truth about the Cuban revolution. These political weapons include Ernesto Che Guevara's *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War* and *To Speak the Truth: Why Washington's Cold War Against Cuba Doesn't End* (see ads on pages 6 and 9).

Meeting in New York, SWP leaders decided to adopt a goal of party branches selling 1,550 copies of the book by April 1. The beginning date of the eight-week drive was February 5, after local party branches and members in the trade unions had taken initial goals.

From reports at these meetings, and short articles sent into the *Militant*, one overriding fact emerges: due to the political polarization and interest among workers in considering radical proposals, revolutionary-minded workers can increase sales of literature on the job by taking Pathfinder books into work, showing them around, and talking about them.

At a meeting February 25 in New York, leaders of the Young Socialists also decided that the YS should join the campaign as part of responding to Washington's latest aggression against the first socialist revolution in the Americas.

Press review in 'Daily Challenge'

The February 22 *Daily Challenge*, a paper circulated in New York's Black community, published a review of *Episodes*. "This classic work," says the review, "is Ernesto Che Guevara's firsthand account of the military campaigns and political events that culminated in the January 1959 popular insurrection that overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista in Cuba."

Among the events promoting the book this week was the New York "Report back from Havana book fair," featuring the book's editor, Mary-Alice Waters. Seven

copies of the book were purchased by participants in the meeting — many of whom already had purchased copies of *Episodes* — along with 25 copies of *Pombo: un hombre de la guerrilla del Che* (*Pombo: A Man of Che's Guerrilla*). This title, written by Harry Villegas, also known as Pombo, a brigadier general in the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Cuba, was just published by Editora Política of Havana.

Socialists in New York are working with student leaders at the Borough of Manhattan Community College to organize an educational event on Cuba this spring. The student leaders purchased five copies of the book as part of their building activities.

With the upturn in labor resistance in Canada, such as the 100,000-strong march in Hamilton, Ontario, February 24, socialists there have decided to put selling Pathfinder books — and the *Episodes* in particular — at the center of their work. They sold one copy of the *Episodes* at the Hamilton demonstration, and seven people asked socialists to get back in touch with them later when they had enough money to buy the book.

Sandra Nelson, a member of the Oil Chemical and Atomic Workers union from Chicago, faxed this report:

"Thursday night, February 22, I took a small selection of Pathfinder books into work at the corn oil refinery, planning to talk to each of my co-workers that night about Pathfinder Press and the new *Episodes* book.

"My first discussion was with a young Puerto Rican man who I was relieving in the control room. He looked through the selection, and I told him about the new book, including some of the editor's experiences in Cuba preparing for publication, and the importance of the book for work-

ing people today. As I talked, he carefully read through the table of contents and the first couple of pages of the introduction. When I paused, he said, 'I want this book.' As he was leaving for home with the book under his arm, he turned and said, 'Maybe we can discuss this sometime.'"

Campaigning with 'Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War' February 5-April 1

CITY	GOAL	SOLD	%
Atlanta, GA	35	26	74%
Des Moines	35	23	66%
Los Angeles	100	63	63%
Greensboro	45	27	60%
Twin Cities	80	47	59%
Seattle	80	47	59%
Miami	50	27	54%
Peoria, IL	28	15	54%
San Francisco	95	50	53%
Newark	133	69	52%
New York	133	67	50%
Salt Lake City	60	29	48%
Boston	60	27	45%
Philadelphia	60	24	40%
Cleveland	45	18	40%
Brooklyn	126	47	37%
Detroit	60	22	37%
Houston	39	14	36%
Morgantown	27	9	33%
Chicago	60	20	33%
Pittsburgh	55	18	33%
Washington, D.C.	75	23	31%
Birmingham, AL	60	18	30%
TOTAL	1541	739	47%
SHOULD BE	1550	569	38%

IN THE UNIONS

UNION	GOAL	SOLD	%
UMWA	7	3	43%
OCAW	60	20	33%
UTU	80	20	25%
UAW	110	15	14%
IAM	90	7	8%
UNITE	42	3	7%
UFCW	12	0	0%
USWA	60	0	0%
TOTAL	461	68	15%
SHOULD BE	500	190	38%

IAM—International Association of Machinists; OCAW — Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers; UAW— United Auto Workers; UFCW— United Food and Commercial Workers; UMWA — United Mine Workers of America; UNITE— Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees; USWA — United Steelworkers of America; UTU—United Transportation Union.

Cuba deals blow to provocations

Continued from front page
course toward the capital city of Havana. The planes, which took off from the Opa-locka airport near Miami, Florida, were piloted by members of a group called Brothers to the Rescue, led by Cuban-American counterrevolutionaries, a number of them with long histories of armed action against the Cuban state dating back to the failed April 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion organized by the CIA.

According to the Cuban government's account, the invasion of Cuban airspace on Saturday afternoon, February 24, was the second hostile incursion that day by the same kind of aircraft, and the tenth such violation of Cuban territory over the past 20 months, involving some 30 planes all told. Throughout this period, Washington had done nothing to stop these escalating provocations organized from U.S. soil.

Washington's hostile moves

With bipartisan unanimity, government officials, journalists, and opinion-makers in Washington denounced the defensive actions of the Cuban armed forces.

Speaking to the White House press corps February 26, Clinton labeled the downing of the planes "an appalling reminder of the nature of the Cuban regime: repressive, violent, scornful of international law."

"All charter air travel from the United States to Cuba will be suspended indefinitely," Clinton said. This is the second major reinforcement of the travel ban during the first three years of the Democratic administration. Journalists, those with family members in Cuba, and the handful of other categories still exempt under specific conditions from tightened regulations imposed by the White House in August 1994 will now find it much more difficult and costly to travel to Cuba.

Clinton said he would "move promptly to reach agreement with the Congress" on legislation to further strengthen the brutal, 34-year-long U.S. financial and trade embargo of Cuba. Two days later, on February 28, White House press secretary Michael McCurry announced that "the president is delighted" to have reached "common ground with the Congress" on the so-called Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act, sponsored by U.S. senator Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) and U.S. representative Dan Burton (R-Ind.) and adopted by both houses of Congress last fall.

"The president, in light of the incident on Saturday, believes that tightening the embargo on Cuba is a necessary step both to deal with this incident and to promote our overall goal of democratic change in Cuba," McCurry said. The White House spokesperson acknowledged that Clinton still did not agree with certain provisions of the Helms-Burton bill that have been protested by many other governments around the world that could be negatively affected by them. But Clinton was more concerned with acting quickly, McCurry said.

Another measure announced by Clinton requests Congress to authorize payments to families of agents involved in anti-Cuban activity, starting with the 4 downed crewmen for Brothers to the Rescue. The White House is seeking to draw the funds from Cuban assets frozen in U.S. accounts

since the expropriation of U.S. capitalist holdings on the island in 1960.

The administration also announced the expansion of the operations of Radio Martí (the U.S. propaganda outlet named, as a gratuitous insult to Cuban patriots, after the central leader of Cuba's revolutionary struggle against Spanish colonial rule and Yankee domination at the end of the last century) and sharp additional restrictions on internal travel by Cuban officials living in or visiting the United States.

U.S. military

The U.S. government simultaneously began to increase military activity off Cuba's shores. Despite the Cuban government's public offer to permit the U.S. Coast Guard to search for the downed aircraft within Cuba's 12-mile territorial waters, U.S. forces limited their operations to outside that area, where U.S. officials claim the shootings occurred. According to McCurry, F-15 fighter planes were scrambled on February 25 to provide air cover to the U.S. flotilla.

The *Miami Herald* reported that Air Force reserve pilots were also summoned on Saturday to fighter squadrons at Homestead Air Force Base in southern Florida. And among the Navy vessels cruising close to Cuban waters early Monday, the *Herald* said, were a guided missile frigate, a guided missile cruiser, and an amphibious assault ship.

As the White House was announcing its intention February 28 to sign the Helms-Burton act into law, defense secretary William Perry said that the Pentagon is "actively exploring what actions we will take in the weeks ahead." The UPI dispatch reporting Perry's comments added that the aircraft carrier *USS Enterprise* and guided missile cruiser *USS Mississippi* were both conducting training exercises in the Caribbean.

What happened February 24?

What actually happened off the northwest coast of Cuba on Saturday, February 24? And what was the sequence of events that led the Cuban armed forces to fire on the two Cessnas? In answer to both questions, there are several conflicting accounts.

According to a February 25 statement issued by the Cuban foreign ministry, between 10:15 and 11:27 a.m. on Saturday morning, three Cessna planes crossed over into Cuba's airspace and retreated to the north after being intercepted by Cuban air force fighters. Later, at 1:21 p.m., the air traffic control center in Havana detected one of the planes once again heading toward Cuban airspace "north of the capital," the statement said, "and they were warned...of the risks they were running by doing this. In response the pilot of the pirate plane said it was clear he could not fly in that zone but he was going to do it anyway."

This part of the Cuban government account is confirmed by the transcript of radio messages released February 27 by Madeleine Albright, based on U.S. intelligence recordings. The transcript reports the following exchange (translated from the Spanish) between the Havana air control tower and "Cessna 3," piloted by José Basulto, the founding leader of Brothers to the Rescue:

"Havana: Sir, be informed that the zone north of Havana is activated, [garble] you, danger behind 24 north parallel.

"Cessna 3: We are aware that we are in danger each time we cross the area to the south of the 24th [parallel] but we are willing to do it as free Cubans."

By 3:15 p.m., the Cuban statement said, the Revolutionary Armed Forces knew from "internal communications of one of the pilots that they were heading toward Havana. Meanwhile, two of the planes were penetrating the restricted zone of Cuban airspace. The head of the group in a third plane [Basulto] remained outside of the 12-mile limit." Then, between 3:21 and 3:28 p.m., the "two pirate Cessna planes ... were shot down by our armed forces ... at a distance of 5 and 8 miles north of the Baracoa beach, west of the city of Havana."

The Cuban government says it has "irrefutable proof" that the two planes were shot down over Cuban waters, including personal items from the four pilots and spotters on the planes and debris from the wreckage.

Twice-told tales in Washington

It took the U.S. government several hours on Sunday, February 25, to settle on its official — current — account of the events.

Initially, according to the Sunday edition of the *Miami Herald*, "a Pentagon official told The Associated Press that early indications suggested the planes may have been heading to Cuba to pick up people and fly them out of the country." Reports Sunday morning on CNN and other television networks also reported statements by unnamed Pentagon officials that they had information that the planes may have been planning to touch down on Cuban territory.

By midday, however, that story had been deep-sixed by U.S. government officials. Reporters for the big-business press asked no embarrassing questions about the source of the now-abandoned "early indications."

The version issued by the White House later on Sunday went as follows:

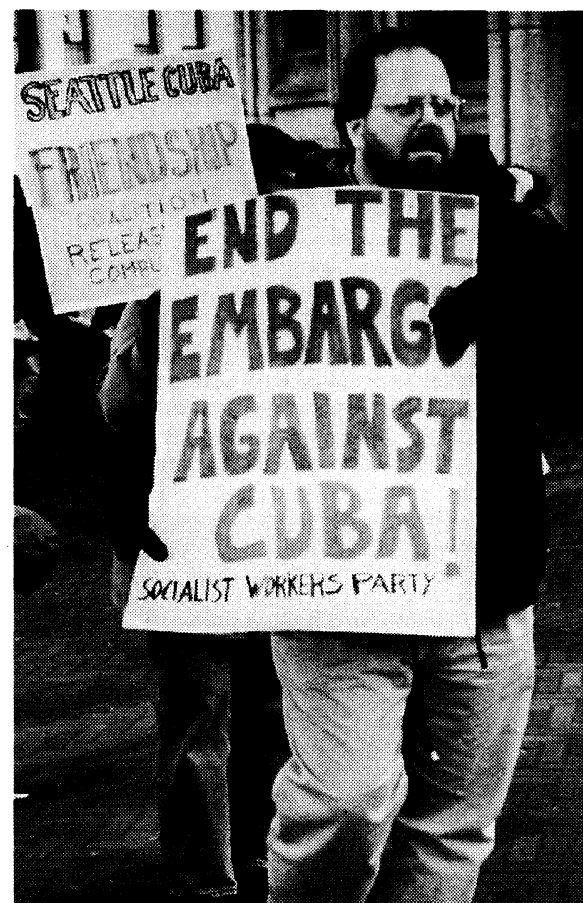
Between 10:00 a.m. and noon on Saturday, Cuban fighters conducted "air patrols in reaction to what they believed to be an incursion of Cuban airspace. The Cuban aircraft return to their base, making no contact with any aircraft." The three Cessnas take off from Opa-locka airport between 1:15 and 2:00 p.m., and at around 2:57 "the Cuban air traffic controller informs the [lead] aircraft of the danger in operating south of the 24th. The [Brothers to the Rescue] aircraft made it clear that it was aware of the danger but was flying in anyway."

By 3:22, the White House says, the "lead aircraft penetrates three nautical miles into Cuban airspace," and over the next 9 minutes Cuban MiG fighter pilots request and receive permission to fire on and destroy two of the Cessnas, one 5 miles and the other 16 miles outside Cuban airspace.

Even after the White House released this account, however, later reports by U.S. press agencies called its accuracy into question. An AP dispatch on Tuesday morning, February 27, for example, reported that "U.S. intelligence officials said the air traffic control tower in Havana warned the [Cessna] pilots they were in danger. The officials said at least one plane, and perhaps all three, ventured into Cuban airspace, though the downing occurred over international waters."

Brothers to the Rescue

Brothers to the Rescue leader José Basulto claims that the planes were on a routine weekend mission to spot potential rafters from Cuba and deliver them to safety. Basulto and other leaders of the group say that this was why the group was founded in 1991 and remains its primary activity. According to a feature article on Brothers to the Rescue in the *New York*



Militant/Lisa Alhberg

February 27 Seattle picket blasts Washington's use of incident to tighten embargo, attack Cuba.

Times, the group had 15 pilots and 5 twin-engine planes prior to the events of February 24, as well as other volunteers who served as spotters during sorties over the Caribbean.

Immediately following the downing of the two Cessnas last weekend, Basulto insisted that the claim even in the White House account that one of the aircraft had entered Cuban airspace "is a lie," and that all three planes had stayed some 15 miles off the Cuban coast. But later in the day on Sunday he told CNN: "I'm not denying or accepting anything. There's always a possibility, although remote, that something like this might have taken place."

In late August 1994, Washington signed an agreement with the Cuban government reversing the previous U.S. government course of refusing to grant legal entry to Cubans who wished to emigrate to the United States, while at the same time encouraging illegal flight from Cuba on homemade rafts and commandeered boats. By that time, the numbers of Cubans seeking to come to the United States by such desperate means had reached more than a thousand a day, as Cuba was still bottoming out of the sharpest economic crisis in the history of the revolution precipitated by the sudden cutoff of subsidized trade with the Soviet Union at the opening of the 1990s.

Since then, the rising tide of rafters has been reduced to a trickle. According to the *New York Times*, for example, the Coast Guard picked up only 27 Cubans in the Florida Straits in January of this year.

In fact, the deliberately provocative character of the recent probes against Cuba register a growing frustration among enemies of the Cuban revolution over the fact that economic and social conditions have begun to noticeably improve over the past year.

A timely warning

Brothers to the Rescue has publicly acknowledged that on three occasions over the past six months — in July 1995, and twice in January of this year — it has organized flights directly over the Havana area, scattering leaflets from the air.

On July 13 of last year, 6 planes, 2 helicopters, and 11 boats violated Cuban airspace and waters. The planes flew at low altitudes, with one of them passing directly over Havana's coastal area, and several of the boats came within 10 miles of the shore. After Cuban naval units had turned back the boats, the revolutionary government issued a statement reiterating "its firm determination to take any and all actions necessary to avoid the repetition of incidents like the one which took place yesterday. Once more we warn that any vessel coming from abroad, which forcefully invades our sovereign waters, could be sunk; and any plane shot down."

Pointing out that terrorist assaults against Cuba have been carried out from small planes and boats repeatedly throughout the history of the revolution,

Continued on Page 14

for further reading

Defending Cuba, Defending Cuba's Socialist Revolution

Mary-Alice Waters

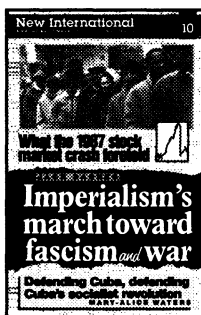
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Protests blast U.S. aggression against Cuba

BY LAURA GARZA

NEW YORK — Across the United States, revolutionary-minded workers, youth, and other opponents of Washington's belligerent policy against Cuba moved into action to respond to the U.S. government's latest attacks on the Cuban revolution.

Protest actions and press conferences have taken place from Seattle to Miami and Boston. Street mobilizations have been announced in dozens of other cities.

At a well-attended February 26 press conference in front of the U.S. Treasury Building in Washington, D.C., Brian Adams stated, "We want to condemn in the strongest possible terms any imposition by the U.S. of additional sanctions against Cuba. The responsibility for Saturday's events rests completely with the Cuban exile groups that organize provocations against the island." Adams, coordinator of the D. C. "Hands Off Cuba" Coalition, was referring to the February 24 shooting down by the Cuban air force of two pirate planes invading that country's airspace. Adams, joined by a dozen activists who gathered on one hour's notice, spoke in front of a banner saying "U.S. Hands Off Cuba; Lift the Economic Embargo and Travel Ban." Last July 13, while visiting Havana, Adams witnessed an incursion into Cuba's airspace, organized by the same Miami-based outfit.

"The Cubans cannot be expected to allow unidentified foreign aircraft to enter Havana's airspace with impunity," Adams stated. "The U.S. would certainly not tolerate such activity here in Washington. Cuba was totally justified in shooting down the planes." Among the media present were NBC TV, Univisión, and the Voice of America.

A March 1 demonstration against the Clinton administration's anti-Cuba moves was called for Friday, March 1, at the Treasury Department. A number of groups are sponsoring a forum that evening titled "Hands off Cuba! Stop the provocations!" José Ponce, first secretary of the Cuban Interests Section, is scheduled to speak.

In Miami on February 27 and in New York City the following day, dozens of reporters from English- and Spanish-language media gathered to hear represen-



Militant/Maureen Coletta

February 27 press conference in Miami denounces U.S. moves against Cuba. From left, Walfrido Moreno of Alliance of Workers in the Cuban Community, Andrés Gómez of Antonio Maceo Brigade, Cachita Moré of Afro-Cuban Cultural Rescue.

tatives of Cuban-American groups and other opponents of the U.S. government's embargo of Cuba. Speakers at the events condemned the Clinton administration's further tightening of travel restrictions and demanded normalization of relations.

Among those speaking out in New York were Dagmaris Cabezas of the Cuban-American Committee for Research and Education Fund, Luis Miranda of Casa de las Américas, and Delvis Fernández Levy of the Cuban American Alliance Education Fund.

An emergency picket in front of the Cuban mission to the United Nations, at 38th Street and Lexington Avenue, was announced for February 29 to demand "U.S. Hands Off Cuba." Activists will also picket the federal building in downtown Manhattan March 1 and 2. Another protest has been called for March 1 outside the former Hotel Theresa in Harlem.

In Miami, Andrés Gómez of the Antonio Maceo Brigade opened the press conference and introduced other participants including Cachita Moré from Afro-Cuban Cultural Rescue, Walfrido Moreno from the Alliance of Workers in the Cuban Community (ATC), and Iván Rosero from

the Miami Coalition Against the U.S. Embargo of Cuba.

"We hold Brothers to the Rescue, and especially its leadership, responsible for the downing of two of its planes and the death of four of its pilots," Gómez stated. "We also hold the Clinton administration responsible for permitting the flights." He pointed out that Brothers to the Rescue has been entering Cuban airspace since May 1994 in spite of repeated warnings.

"During this period of 21 months the Cuban government sent the U.S. government five diplomatic notes" about 10 violations, Gómez noted.

Gómez stated that the U.S. condemnation of the Cuban action is "the height of hypocrisy." He pointed to the U.S. shooting down of a civilian Iranian airliner over the Persian Gulf in 1988, which killed nearly 300 people, and the welcoming of Orlando Bosch, a right-wing terrorist who directed the cold-blooded bombing of a Cuban plane with 73 passengers in 1976. Bosch was granted a visa allowing him entry into the United States six years ago.

Eight right-wing counterdemonstrators stood across the street from the press conference, which was held at the Pathfinder

Bookstore in the Little Haiti neighborhood. About 30 cops were deployed outside the conference at the request of the conference organizers. Dozens of Haitians who live or work near the bookstore watched all the action. "The Cubans did the right thing," said one. "The U.S. government just can't stand it that Cuba is a free country with dignity."

In Boston, 50 people joined a protest on February 27 where the most popular chants were "U.S. Hands off Cuba," "Defend Cuban Sovereignty," and "U.S.A., CIA, Hands off Cuba." The event, held at the busy downtown Park Street Station in late afternoon, was sponsored by the July 26 Coalition. Speakers at the Boston protest included Carol Thomas of the July 26 Coalition; Haitian activist Philippe Genus; Laura Ross, representing the Social Action Committee of the Community Church of Boston; Larry Rossello of the National Committee to Free Puerto Rican Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners; and Ryan Kelly, a member of the Young Socialists and activist for the Cuban Youth Exchange.

The same day in subfreezing weather in Minneapolis, 50 people picketed in front of the Federal Building and leafleted passersby. The action was called by the Twin Cities Cuba Friendship Committee, the Twin Cities Cuba Network, and Women Against Military Madness.

Meanwhile, in Seattle about 100 joined a protest in front of the Federal Building demanding an end to the embargo, no new travel restrictions, and the release of 395 computers confiscated by the U.S. government to prevent them from being donated to Cuban hospitals. The Seattle Cuba Friendship Committee also called a teach-in for March 6 to continue responding to attacks on Cuba. Among those at the picket, were students from Pacific Lutheran University who had recently returned from a visit to Cuba.

The Philadelphia Cuba Support Coalition called for a March 1 protest at City Hall. A local radio station, KYW, called the coalition soon after the news broke about the planes being shot down. The response by a coalition spokesperson was played repeatedly over that weekend.

The Pittsburgh Cuba Coalition, at a meeting of about two dozen activists, called for a press conference and picket line at the Federal Building there on March 1, as did activists in Newark, New Jersey. In New Haven, Connecticut, opponents of Washington's attacks on Cuba set a picket line for March 2. Actions are also planned for March 6 in Boston, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Minneapolis, and other cities to demand the release of computers seized from a caravan organized by Pastors for Peace and an end to the U.S. government's embargo of Cuba.

In addition, Militant Labor Forums on Washington's attacks against Cuba are being organized in cities across the country the evening of March 1 (see directory for nearest address).

Contributing to this article were Janice Lynn in Washington, D.C.; Seth Galinsky in Miami; Valerie Johnson in Boston; Jon Hillson in Minneapolis; Robbie Scherr in Seattle; Peter Seidman in Philadelphia; and Dick Geyer in Pittsburgh.

Workers in Miami discuss Cuba events

BY JANET POST

MIAMI — While the press and media here have featured bellicose statements from Democratic and Republican politicians and from right-wing Cubans, many working people, including Cuban Americans, have responded differently to the downing of two planes from Miami that attempted an illegal flight over Cuban airspace.

The morning after the February 24 event, Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists militants went out on the streets of Miami to defend the Cuban revolution — starting by selling socialist literature at the annual Miami AIDS Walk. The next day Militant supporters visited a community college and a technical school. They found that even when people disagreed with the action taken by the Cuban military the discussions remained civil.

A Black woman student at Miami Dade Community College said, "I would have done the same thing as the Cubans." "You don't go shooting down unarmed people," said another student who disagreed with the actions taken.

On Sunday, February 25, 40 people attended a meeting of the Alliance of Workers in the Cuban Community (ATC), an organization of Cuban Americans opposed to the embargo of Cuba. The flights and provocative actions against Cuba were at the center of the discussion, reported Young Socialists member Edmundo Saballos.

Participants at the meeting expressed their willingness to protest in the streets, if needed, to defend their right to travel to Cuba. One member, who came to the United States in 1979, said, "I think it's terrorism, and besides it's Cuban territory, and they were warned enough before it

happened and while it happened. I think it's their fault. If it were the other way around, the U.S. would have done the same. First they threw leaflets, then flares, what would have been next, bombs?"

In a continuing assault on the Cuban government's scenario of the air engagement, Miami WISN-TV has repeatedly run an interview with a South Florida fisherman who claims to have witnessed the planes being shot down "23 to 25 miles" off the Cuban coast.

Meanwhile another Miami station aired coverage from Cuban television with a map showing the actual location of the downing of the planes and statements by Cuban workers. "We will simply not allow anyone to ever invade our country without our consent. That's the bottom line," said one of the Cubans. "They should have shot down those planes a long time ago. They displayed a lack of respect for a nation's sovereignty. What Cuba did was way overdue."

Workers in Miami are discussing the situation non-stop. One young fueler at Hudson General at the Miami airport commented, "Now Castro shows what he really is, a dictator." A Jamaican worker responded, "I like Castro, he's a militant, and look how he helped South Africa."

A worker at the Aerothrust aerospace plant was concerned about a U.S. military response, saying, "If they bomb Cuba that's the end of my husband's aunt and her house because she lives near a military facility in Cuba."

"They should leave Havana alone. All they are up to is trying to provoke a war between the U.S. and Cuba," commented a United Airlines flight kitchen worker.

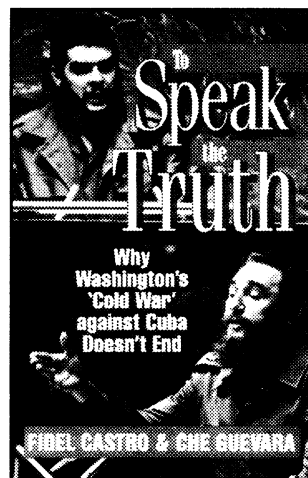
"How can anyone defend Cuba for killing those people? If Castro would

shoot down those planes, what is he doing to people on the island?" said another.

"What do people expect when these planes go flying into territory where they don't belong? They could easily have crashed into a commercial airline and killed all of its passengers," said a mechanic. At U.S. Air even those workers who echoed the saber-rattling listened to other views. Some workers made comments along the lines of "Castro told them before, so what did they expect?"

One airline cleaner said, "How come they never interview someone like me and others here at U.S. Air who think the Cubans had the right to do what they did?"

Janet Post is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 368 in Miami.



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To Speak the Truth
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Patrick Buchanan appeals to farmers with his counterfeit anticapitalism

BY BILL KALMAN

DES MOINES, Iowa — Patrick Buchanan's strident "America First" nationalism has been getting a growing hearing among middle-class layers and from many workers and farmers looking for radical answers to the failure of liberal bourgeois democracy.

This was the case in Iowa recently, as the "Buchanan Brigades" fanned across the state trying to get out the farm vote and recruit fresh troops to their master's incipient fascist movement. The ultrarightist politician came in second in the February 12 Iowa Republican Party caucuses for the presidential nomination, and then swept to first place in the New Hampshire primary eight days later.

In Iowa Buchanan campaigned throughout the state, particularly in the rural areas, with his 10-point program dubbed "Family Farm Bill of Rights." He also peddled his "Small Business Bill of Rights." Buchanan's appeals were filled with demagogic attacks on big business.

Picking up on the description used by working farmers struggling against the encroachment on their livelihoods, Buchanan told the audience at a convention of the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation last December that the increasing number of hog confinement facilities "are not really farms at all, they're giant factories.... They stink for miles away."

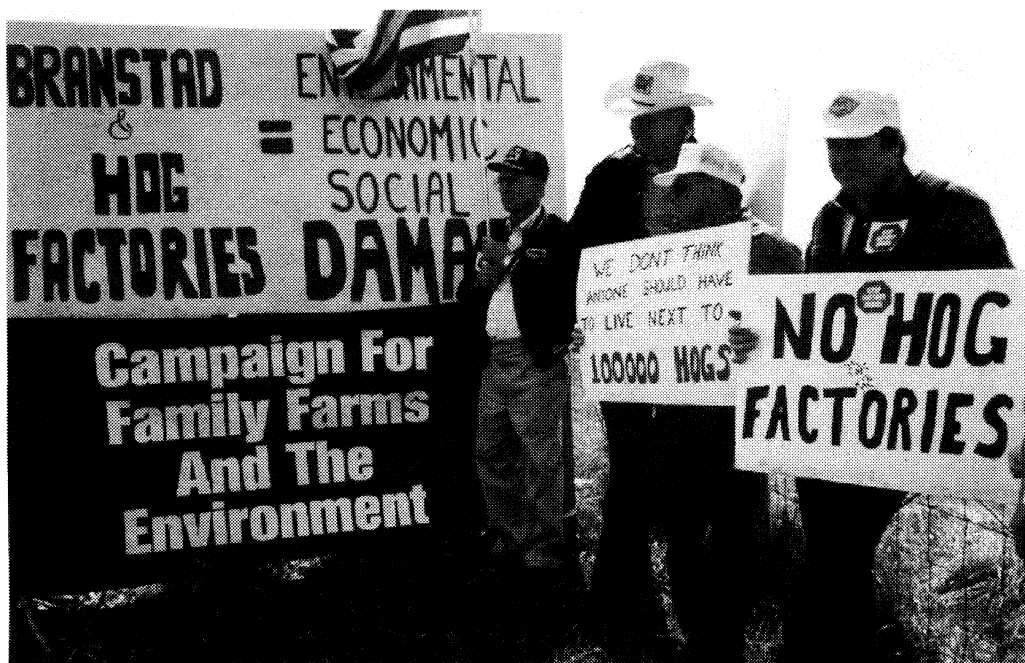
He also expressed sympathy with 20 protesters who blocked the entrance to a hog facility under construction by Iowa Select farms in Maloy, Iowa, in late November.

"This is one area where we can get together with people who have different philosophies than we do in some areas on the grounds that we all want to preserve the family farm," Buchanan stated.

A close examination of Buchanan's farm program, however, reveals a calculated but concealed defense of capitalist farmers and a course toward deepening divisions in the countryside to the detriment of working farmers. It is but another aspect of Buchanan's more and more openly national socialist program — phony anti-capitalism.

In using the term "family farm," Buchanan makes no distinction between a modest 500-acre operation worked by a farm family and huge sprawling estates where the owning family employs dozens of agricultural wage workers.

While appealing to the "little guy," or the "working men or women," Buchanan covers up the real divisions that exist between working farmers and capitalist farmers. These are not a single class with common interests, but represent a wide spectrum of class layers comprising both exploiters and exploited. This span includes owners of large, mechanized capitalist farms and ranches; proprietors of small capitalist farms employing wage labor; exploited working farmers who em-



April 1995 protest in Rhodes, Iowa, against hog confinement facilities driving working farmers off the land. Buchanan's farm program makes no distinction between a modest farm operation and huge capitalist estates employing dozens of farm workers.

ploy little or no wage labor; agricultural wage workers, who work for capitalist farmers; and, at the bottom of the ladder, migrant laborers who follow the crop, many of whom are undocumented.

These layers have different relationships to capitalist production and often counterposed class interests.

Working farmers and taxes

It's useful to review each of Buchanan's 10 points. Let's look at the first three together.

"1. A Balanced Budget Amendment with a tax limitation provision.

"2. Abolish the inheritance tax on family farms.

"3. Abolish the capital gains tax on family farms."

First of all, balancing federal and state government budgets is the problem of the ruling rich. It's not the problem of workers and farmers. For the capitalist class, "balancing the budget" means cutting back the social gains working people have won over the years. Topping the list of programs on the chopping block are welfare, Medicare, Medicaid, and eventually Social Security. It's the toilers in the cities and in the countryside who will be hit with the biggest blows in this assault on the social wage.

On the question of taxes, Buchanan appeals demagogically to the opposition among many small farmers to being squeezed by taxation.

But again, the ultrarightist politician covers up class distinctions. It is ludicrous to compare the proportionately low taxes paid by agribusiness giants like Premium Standard Farms in Missouri or Murphy Farms in North Carolina — who enjoy cozy relationships with state governments

and are armed with lawyers probing every tax loophole — to the taxes heaped on small livestock and grain producers barely scratching out a living.

When Buchanan renewed his call for repeal of federal inheritance taxes during a visit to northwestern Iowa, the "family farm" he toured to make his point was the Wells Dairy plant in Le Mars, a large manufacturer of ice cream and other dairy products.

In the *Communist Manifesto* Karl Marx and Frederick Engels explained that the communist program of the working class in power includes "abolition of property in land and application of all rents of land to public purposes," as well as "abolition of all right of inheritance."

In other words, socialists oppose the "right" of the capitalist ruling families to pass on their ownership of land and the means of production to their heirs. This is the main way the capitalist class perpetuates itself as a small ruling minority.

At the same time, socialists defend the right of exploited farmers to use the land. This may include the right to transfer the family's land title to a single heir, as is the case in Cuba, where the land is nationalized.

Socialists oppose capital gains, sales, or value-added taxes. These all work to the benefit of the ruling rich. If anything, small farmers need immediate relief from the crushing tax burden that is part of their exploitation — one of the ways through which the capitalist class robs a portion of the surplus value working farmers produce.

The existing bourgeois tax system has been cobbled together over decades to disguise and protect an antagonistic set of class interests and relations. Its purpose is to mask the shifts of wealth and income distribution against the interests of working people, as well as to reinforce bourgeois values.

Socialists advocate the abolition of all taxes and their replacement by a single tax: a steeply graduated tax on income from capital. All exploited producers in the countryside, such as working farmers, would be exempt from such a tax. But agribusiness and capitalist farmers who exploit wage labor would be taxed steeply.

Pressure to produce

Buchanan's next two points seem to be about the environment, but are really about increasing agricultural production and expanding the U.S. export boom:

"4. Roll back the wetlands regulations that have been imposed on private property owners by federal courts and bureaucrats and make Congress define wetlands according to the rule of common sense.

"5. Rewrite the Endangered Species Act so that Congress is forced to vote on every species that is listed as endangered."

There is great pressure by trade monopolies to put more land back in production because of the current export boom in

farm products. This is at the heart of the "Freedom to Farm Act" just passed by the U.S. Senate. U.S. agricultural exports reached a record high of \$54 billion in the year ending September 30, and are expected to increase by another \$4 billion in the year ahead. Beef, pork, corn, and wheat exports have seen big percentage increases in overseas sales this year.

Proponents of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), the land set-aside program established in 1985, claim that the program conserves soil and protects the environment and certain endangered species. But the capitalist ruling families and their hirelings in Congress could not care less about the environment or endangered species.

The CRP was set up primarily to limit agricultural production in order to keep U.S. grain prices high for the profit-hungry international monopoly traders. Couched as a conservation measure to win broader support, the CRP has idled 40 million acres in the past decade. It is slated to expire in the year 2000.

Buchanan is trying to exploit the fact that the administration of these programs is what one Iowa farmer called "a bureaucratic system that's gone haywire."

But Buchanan's fundamental opposition to set-aside programs at this time, like that of many other capitalist politicians, stems not from opposing unwarranted government intrusion into farmers' planting decisions, but from the fact they serve now as a curb on production.

Regulation and compensation

The third part of Buchanan's farm program concerns federal regulations and property rights:

"6. Permanently exempt family farms from OSHA [Occupational Safety and Health Administration], and begin a Regulatory Revolution to restore sanity to federal regulation. There will be a moratorium on new regulation, a sunset provision of 5 years on all regulations, and defined annual cutback in paperwork for family farms.

"7. Defund the Legal Services Corporation and end the legal assault on American family farms and business with tort reform at both the state and local level. Punitive and compensatory damages should be related to actual harm done — and the loser should be made to pay the legal fees of the winner.

"8. The restoration of property rights under the 5th Amendment. Just as we believe in no taxation without representation, we believe in no regulatory deprivation of property rights without just compensation."

Farming is the one of the most dangerous occupations, yet laws pertaining to minimum wage, child labor, and safety standards are not applied to the industry. This benefits large capitalist concerns first and foremost. If anything, safety regulations in agriculture need to be maintained, strengthened, and enforced.

Family farms employing wage labor should not be exempt from these laws. And all applicable legislation should be used to protect agricultural workers, including the growing number in hog confinement facilities, more than half of whom, according to the American Lung Association, experience one or more symptoms of respiratory illness or irritation.

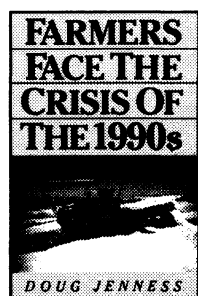
Agricultural workers

Likewise, Buchanan's concerns over the "legal assault on American family farms" is primarily an attack on farm workers. The Legal Services Corporation (LSC) referred to by Buchanan is a private, non-profit organization that distributes federal money to programs funding legal aid to those not able to pay. The LCS has been strongly criticized by the American Farm Bureau Federation, which objects to cases brought against its better-off farmer members by migrant workers.

The scapegoating of immigrant laborers — many of whom were farmers forced off the land in Mexico and other countries

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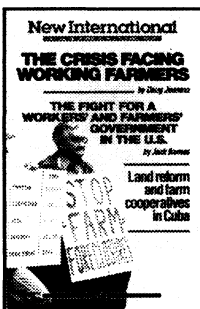
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Buchanan campaign

Continued from front page

affirmative action in that state and won the Republican caucuses.

Buchanan came in third in the February 27 Arizona primary, close behind Sen. Bob Dole. Publishing tycoon Steve Forbes placed first, with about a third of the vote. Dole won the North and South Dakota primaries the same day. Buchanan finished second in South Dakota and third in North Dakota, behind Forbes. Lamar Alexander, the former governor of Tennessee, came in fourth in all three races.

The growing protests and the slightly poorer showing in the latest round of primaries have not changed Buchanan's course. He is out to win troops to his "movement," as he calls it, not just votes in the primaries.

Buchanan's tone in speaking to his supporters — shown daily on television — makes this clear. After winning the New Hampshire primary, on his way to campaign in other states, Buchanan held his usual meeting with his campaign troops. He told his backers to act without waiting for orders from headquarters. "Mount up, everybody, and ride to the sound of the guns!" he declared.

Speeches to his "Buchanan Brigades" take on a semi-military flavor. Photos in the big-business press show him giving supporters a raised-fist salute or holding a rifle above his head. This attitude serves not only to firm up his cadres but also to scare off those who can be intimidated by the kind of ultrarightist movement he is building.

"Stop calling me names," Buchanan warned his rivals in the Republican primary. "Calm, down folks, because if you keep it up, you make it difficult for me to bring my people home" to support the Republican nominee, he said, reminding Dole, Alexander, and company that while he has one foot in the electoral party machine, the other is in the streets.

Buchanan is frequently charged by other bourgeois politicians and commentators with using "code words" to indicate his racist and anti-Semitic views. He often singles out the Goldman Sachs investment house and Supreme Court justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg — both Jewish names — for attack. He demagogically tells "José"

not to come into the United States. He refers to United Nations secretary-general Boutros Boutros-Ghali as "Boo-Boo Ghali." Buchanan generally replies to the charge of using "code words" by denying he is racist or anti-Semitic, but in a way that leaves the matter open for interpretation.

Fake 'friend' of workers

Buchanan presents himself as speaking in the interests of the working class, against both big business and the top union bureaucracy. In a February 25 interview on the "Face the Nation" television show, he talked about his attitude toward trade unions. Explaining that he supports the bosses' "right" to permanently replace strikers, he pointed to the 1990-91 strike at the New York *Daily News*. "These fellows went on strike and some of them wanted to kill the newspaper," he said.

When it fits his "America First" nationalist rhetoric, though, strikes are all right. "On the issue like Boeing," he said, referring to last year's walkout, "where those fellows are striking because Boeing's moving their assembly plant to China, I'm with the workers 100 percent."

Buchanan opposes raising the minimum wage. "The minimum wage in Mexico, before devaluation, was 58 cents an hour," he told Brownstein. "You raise it to \$6 an hour in the United States and that's like tilting the table. All your low-wage, less skilled jobs will automatically be tumbling into Mexico."

AFL-CIO president John Sweeney recently denounced Buchanan's views on many issues and said the Republican politician is only pretending to be a friend of labor. In the same breath, however, Sweeney gave credence to the lie that Buchanan speaks in the interests of the exploited. At a February 22 meeting of the union federation's executive council in Bal Harbour, Florida, Sweeney described Buchanan as "a Presidential candidate who talks the talk, but won't walk the walk," according to the *New York Times*.

"Listen, we don't get the boys at Bal Harbour," Buchanan told reporters in Arizona in response. "We are getting the working men and women of America.... Senator Dole represents the board room,



7,000 people marched in Louisiana February 24 to protest Gov. Mike Foster's stance against affirmative action. Buchanan campaigned against affirmative action there.

or the business round table. And some of these other fellows, like Mr. Clinton, they represent the hierarchy of big labor. We represent the working men and women."

Not an 'isolationist' foreign policy

Buchanan used the "Face the Nation" appearance to stake out an aggressive stance on Cuba. He also made clear his position on the U.S.-led war against Iraq, which has been described as "isolationist," by saying, "I felt that the regime in Kuwait was not worth the life of a single Marine. I felt we should have drawn the line in Saudi Arabia." At the same time he praised then-president George Bush, saying he "fought that war the way Vietnam should have been fought, which is to go through, achieve your purpose for victory, pay no attention to the critics."

Buchanan has also called for sending the U.S. Navy's Seventh Fleet to patrol the waters between China and Taiwan as a threat against Beijing. He says U.S. troops should not be in Bosnia; in the past he has instead spoken for defending "Christian, Catholic Croatia."

Another fervent theme of Buchanan's campaign is opposition to abortion rights. "I don't care about the circumstances of the child's conception," he told a Right-to-

Life breakfast of nearly 1,000 in Phoenix. "You want to execute somebody in the case of rape, execute the rapist and let the unborn child live." Buchanan is firmly standing by a campaign aide, Mike Farris, who is under attack for attending a dinner to support people who shot doctors who provide abortions.

International reaction to Buchanan

"Heil Buchanan," said the Edinburgh *Scotsman* in response to Buchanan's victory in New Hampshire.

Other bourgeois newspapers and politicians around the world had similar, if slightly less blunt, reactions. "Even the most reactionary financial barons consider Bill Clinton a blessing compared to the man who would build a wall around the entire U.S.A. to 'secure' American jobs," said a commentary in *Verdens Gang*, the largest Norwegian daily.

Buchanan's "attitude should worry every person who has analyzed his actions and statements," commented Mexican congressman Carlos Reta Martínez.

The U.S. candidate is now increasingly compared to the ultranationalist, fascist-minded politicians Jean-Marie Le Pen in France and Vladimir Zhirinovskiy in Russia. Zhirinovskiy himself congratulated Buchanan as a "comrade and brother-in-arms," suggesting they both "set aside places in U.S. and Russian territory to deport" Jews. Buchanan rejected Zhirinovskiy's invitation.

There is considerable debate in bourgeois circles in the United States on how to deal with Buchanan's rise and popularity. While many liberals are trying to "expose" Buchanan's racist, sexist, anti-gay, and anti-Semitic views, a lot of conservatives are crying, "He's a leftist!"

Buchanan "sounds like someone from the AFL-CIO," said Stuart Butler, director of domestic policy studies at the conservative Heritage Foundation.

"In the view of many conservatives... Buchanan has suddenly positioned himself as America's leading critic of unfettered capitalism," stated an article titled "Patrick Buchanan... Liberal?" in the business section of the February 23 *Washington Post*. Rush Limbaugh, one of the most widely listened to right-wing radio talk show hosts, said, "Pat Buchanan is not a conservative. He's a populist."

From Arizona, Buchanan's campaign moved on to Georgia, where he continued to be dogged by his new problem — protesters. Twenty-five people demonstrated outside his campaign rally in Marietta, Georgia, February 27. Frank Snelson, a 25-year-old Black man, leaned into traffic from the sidewalk with signs he had written up just before the rally. One said, "Buchanan is a jackass." The other read, "Keep abortion legal."

Snelson explained, "I've never been to a protest or anything before, but when I heard he was going to be here I thought, this is just too close to home. I've got to come out to this."

Jamie Smith, a law student, came to protest along with her sister. "I'm here representing everyone who should be here," she said, "the gay community, Jewish community, Black community. Buchanan should be wearing a sheet."

Ellen Haywood in Atlanta contributed to this article.

Patrick Buchanan appeals to farmers

Continued from Page 10

— by both Buchanan and the Farm Bureau should be rejected by working farmers and trade unionists. This is a life-or-death question. Defense of the rights of immigrants, who are a large and growing proportion of workers in Midwest packinghouses today, is necessary to forge a worker-farmer alliance that can fight effectively against our common exploiters.

A bill passed by the Iowa state legislature last year makes it harder for small farmers and other rural residents to sue the megafarms over environmental issues. Because of this new law regulating "nuisance lawsuits," plaintiffs must now prove "clear and convincing" negligence on the part of these capitalist farms or be held personally liable if the claim is found to be "frivolous". This is designed to intimidate opponents of the hog confinement system and further enshroud the machinations of these corporations in secrecy.

These proposals are related to the so-called "private property rights" movement that originated when wealthy Western ranchers balked at even minimal government concerns about public land use. Since then the Farm Bureau, National Cattlemen's Association, and National Pork Producers Council have become proponents of this cause. In several states legislation is pending that would compensate big landowners who claim government regulations have reduced or destroyed the value of their farmland.

This is part of Buchanan's "radical" demagoguery, through which he tries to bring working farmers in tow behind a program of capitalist agribusiness.

The fight to nationalize all land and make it available to those willing to work it is at the heart of a revolutionary alliance between workers and farmers. Under a workers and farmers government, the land of the large landowners and the big factory

farms would be expropriated, while the right of working farmers to work their land would be zealously safeguarded.

International market

The final two points of Buchanan's "Farm Bill of Rights" get to the heart of the class distinctions in the countryside:

"9. Aggressive action to secure significant market share for U.S. agricultural products in the emerging markets of Asia and the developing world.

"10. A level playing field for American farmers with their European competitors. European farmers enjoy a 16-to-1 advantage in government export subsidies over their American counterparts. This should be erased so that American and European farmers can compete equally in the global marketplace."

This program accepts and defends the framework of capitalism, which exists to maximize profits for Cargill, Con Agra, IBP, Archer Daniels Midland, and other corporations — Buchanan's railing against "big multinationals" to the contrary. And this is counterposed to meeting the social needs of toilers in the countryside. Working farmers don't trade internationally or compete with Asian or European farmers. In fact, they lose control of their product at the packing plant, feed lot, or grain elevator.

U.S. agribusiness is pushing aggressively for bigger pieces of the world market against their capitalist competitors. Their government in Washington, D.C., is ready to carry out trade and military wars to protect this drive, and to use food as a weapon against anyone who stands in their way.

Democratic and Republican politicians talk "free trade" while supporting protectionist measures slapped on thousands of products. Buchanan raises high the protectionist banner as part of taking an even

more aggressive stance toward big-business rivals in the Pacific and Europe, a position that in the end will benefit a handful of wealthy agricultural merchants at the expense of workers and farmers here and around the world.

Farmers and workers

Counterposed to Buchanan's fake anti-capitalism, socialists demand a moratorium on all farm foreclosures, cheap credit, and a guaranteed market for crops, livestock, and dairy products above the costs of a farmer's production and sufficient to make a decent living.

As long as farmers want to work the land and produce goods for society, the government should guarantee them use of the land.

Moreover, socialists fight to forge a workers and farmers alliance that can take power out of the hands of the capitalist bloodsuckers. In a socialist society, the world's resources could be rationally used, and a real division of labor created. Workers in Midwest agricultural implement plants, for example, could produce machinery that farmers around the world can use to help feed the world. Within the framework of sound conservation measures, restrictions on farmers' production should be lifted so they can help increase the world's food supply.

Forming an alliance of workers and farmers across national borders is a necessary first step in that direction.

Under capitalism, workers and farmers alike face ruination. Buchanan's "America First" proposals are aimed at duping small farmers to follow a course against their potential allies in the trade unions and the entire working class, and down the road toward fascism and war.

Bill Kalman is a member of United Transportation Union Local 867 in Des Moines.

Campaign set to demand Curtis's release

Continued from front page

This rejection comes after they were sent voluminous evidence of the decade-long relationship between Curtis and Kaku. In addition, Curtis submitted three job offers that are awaiting his arrival in Chicago. But Sneed ruled that because Curtis and Kaku's marriage is "common law," it does not count, and Curtis has no "ties" to Illinois that would justify his parole there.

"At the same time, Mark now faces unprecedented censorship from prison officials at the Iowa State Penitentiary in Fort Madison, where he remains imprisoned," Studer told the meeting. "Over the last two months, three articles he wrote for the *Militant* have been seized by prison authorities. Curtis has submitted numerous articles to the paper during the seven years he has been imprisoned, including writing a regular column, 'From Behind Prison Walls.' Despite Curtis's requests, prison authorities have so far refused to give him a reason for this censorship."

Curtis sent the first article, on reactions among fellow inmates to his parole, in December. He mailed the second item in early January. This article focused on the increased hiring of prison guards across the United States and reported on an assembly of inmates in the exercise yard at the Iowa State Penitentiary in Fort Madison to discuss the administration's decision to impose a smoking ban. Curtis sent a third article in early February, this time a compilation of items from his mail bag. He's now working on a fourth article on the discussions among inmates on Washington's aggression against Cuba.

The *Militant* has sent a formal protest to prison authorities, demanding Curtis's mail to the paper be released immediately.

Since Curtis was informed that his application for parole to Illinois was rejected, he and Kaku have begun the process of formalizing their marriage. On February 21 they filed a signed and notarized application for a license with the Lee County Clerk in Iowa, who has jurisdiction over the prison.

However, Curtis has now been told that the warden claims the power to interfere in their personal affairs—even though, under Iowa law, the prison already lists the two as married.

"Prison chaplain Delwin Vande Krol told Mark that a form informing Kate of the charges for which he was convicted and asking why she wants to marry a prisoner has to be sent to her, signed, and returned," Studer told the February 27 meeting. "Then Mark meets with the chaplain,

who makes a determination whether to recommend to the warden whether the marriage should be allowed to take place. If the warden decides to permit the wedding, it must meet strict guidelines set by the prison. Overall, Vande Krol told Curtis, the process could take up to two months.

"If the wedding is allowed, and after it is concluded, Mark can send a copy of the license and ask Illinois corrections authorities to reopen his application for parole," Studer said.

Letter-writing campaign launched

"We need to launch a public campaign immediately to move to reverse these attacks on Curtis," Studer proposed to the meeting. "We need to organize to press prison authorities to reverse their censorship of Curtis's articles and to let Mark know that we will continue to fight alongside him until he is free."

After the meeting concluded, the activists present put out a 400-piece mailing

to Curtis supporters around the world. The letter was also e-mailed to dozens of organized groups of Curtis supporters, from Miami to New Zealand.

The mailing urges supporters to write to Warden Gerardo Acevedo at the Iowa State Penitentiary, Box 316, Fort Madison, Iowa 52627, urging prison authorities to reverse their censorship policy and release Mark's articles.

"Take this fact sheet to supporters of free speech—unionists, anti-censorship groups such as PEN, prison watchdog organizations like the ACLU National Prison Project, political activists, and others—asking them to write to the warden," the defense committee urges.

The committee also asks supporters of freedom for Mark Curtis to write the framed-up unionist immediately.

"Express your continuing solidarity with his fight," the mailing asks. "Write to Mark Curtis #805338, Iowa State Penitentiary, Box 316, Fort Madison, Iowa 52627." The letter asks supporters to let

Curtis know their view of the refusal of Illinois authorities to allow him parole and what they think of the prison officials' interference into his and Kaku's personal lives.

"And tell him that the attempt by the prison to censor his articles," the defense committee circular continues, "his right to communicate with those on the outside, is a blow to free speech. Let him know that you intend to follow each step of his fight for freedom and are ready to help in any way possible."

"Ask your co-workers, those you collaborate with in politics, and your fellow union members to write as well. Distributing widely the Pathfinder pamphlet *Why Is Mark Curtis Still in Prison?* will serve as the best explanation of the stakes in this fight."

The Mark Curtis Defense Committee asks that copies of letters to prison authorities and to the imprisoned political activist be sent to its address, Box 477419, Chicago, Illinois, 60647.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

Speak Out in Defense of Cuba Friday, March 1

On Friday, March 1, the Militant Labor Forum in every U.S. city is sponsoring a special speak-out to defend the Cuban government's decision to shoot down two pirate planes invading Cuba's air space on February 24 and to condemn Washington's military probes and other threats against Cuba.

For information on location, time, and speakers see addresses and telephone numbers in the directory below.

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The Fight for Women's Rights Today. Panel discussion. Fri., March 8, 7:30 p.m. Translation into Spanish. 137 N.E. 54th St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (305) 756-1020.

ILLINOIS

Chicago

The International Assault on Workers' Standards of Living: What's Behind These Attacks and How Can We Fight Back. Speaker: Elizabeth Stone, member of Interna-

tional Association of Machinists and Socialist Workers Party. Fri. March 8, 7:30 p.m. 1223 N. Milwaukee Ave. Donation: \$4. Tel: (312) 829-6815.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

Defend Cuba's Sovereignty: U.S. Hands Off Cuba. Panel discussion. Fri., March 1, 7:30 p.m. 780 Tremont St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (617) 247-6772.

MINNESOTA

St. Paul

Buchananism: What It Is, Where It Comes From, and How to Fight It. Fri., March 8, 7:30 p.m. 2490 University Ave. (Bus #16, at Route 280). Donation: \$4. Tel: (612) 644-6325.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

Union Power and Rail Safety: A Necessary Combination. Panel. Fri., March 8, 7:30 p.m. 141 Halsey (corner of Raymond Blvd.) Donation: \$4. Tel: (201) 543-3341.

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Learn From The Beijing Conference. A panel of women's rights fighters, including some who attended the Beijing Conference, evaluate the status of women's rights in the world today. Fri., March 8, 7:30 p.m. 147 East 900 South. Donation: \$4. Tel: (801) 355-1124.

BRITAIN

London

Patrick Buchanan: National Socialist. How the Ultra-Right Uses Counterfeit Socialism to Build a Fascist Movement. Speaker: Tony Hunt, Communist League. Sat., March 9, 7:30 p.m. 47 The Cut (nearest tube: Waterloo). Donation: £2. Tel: 0171-401-2409.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland

The Development of Capitalism in New Zealand. Speaker: Terry Coggan, Communist League. Fri., March 8, 7:30 p.m. La Gonda Arcade, 203 Karangahape Rd. Donation: \$3. Tel: (9) 379-3075.

Christchurch

Oppose New Spy Bill, Abolish Government Spy Agencies. Discussion on Security and Intelligence Agencies Bill. Speaker: Nathan Simms. Fri., March 8, 7 p.m. 199 High St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (3) 365-6055.

—CALENDAR—

ILLINOIS

Chicago

Rally/March: Women's Future - World's Future. Fri., March 8, noon. Rally begins at Federal Plaza and will proceed to the State of Illinois Bldg.

Forum/Teach In: Beijing and Beyond: Women's Rights to Economic Justice. Sat., March 9, 9:30 p.m. DePaul University, Lewis Hall, Wabash and Jackson. Donation: \$5.

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Rally for Racial Justice Against Racial Violence and Police Brutality. On the 5th anniversary of the racist murder of Manuel Mayi, a Dominican honor student at Queens College, who was chased and beaten to death by a racist gang in Corona Queens in March 1991. Thurs., March 28; Rally: 4 p.m.; March: 5:30 p.m. For more information, or to join the organizing network, contact the National Congress for Puerto Rican Rights at (212) 631-4263.

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Jeez Mike, give us a break — "I kind of got off easy. Most revolutionaries were killed....it took 200 years for people to decide Jesus Christ was positive." — Junk bond megaswindler Michael Milken who was sentenced to 10 years and served two.



Harry Ring

It figures — New York Judge Lorin Duckman hit the headlines when he ignored a woman's protection plea and released her ex-

boy friend who then killed her. Now its charged that during a 1991 spousal abuse case, the good judge confided to lawyers in his chambers: "Even I have beat my wife. It happens."

'Been a pleasure having you' — "Stay off the 'blessing in disguise' theme....Don't say, 'You shouldn't take it so hard.'... Stay off the topic of criticizing the company....Don't say, 'I know how you feel.'" — From 10-hour how-to-fire course for AT&T managers.

Short-lived dream — Harvard researchers found a marked difference in attitude toward school among Mexican immigrant youth and second-generation Chicanos. The new arrivals liked school

much more. "Immigrants arrive with a tremendous positive energy," one researcher said. "But the more exposed they are [to U.S. life] the more their dreams fade. The data is very strong on this."

'A few bad apples' dep't (I) — The Philadelphia District Attorney's office now has 99 cases in a single police district in which the convictions will require review. Six ex-cops admitted planting drugs on people, stealing their money and filing false reports.

'A few bad apples' dep't (II) — A Toronto Globe and Mail article on the murderous New Orleans police says that Antoinetta Frank, a cop convicted of slaying another cop, was the first person to survive being arrested for cop-

killing. There was the 1990 case of a man who did survive arrest as a suspect in the killing of a policeman. But a mob of cops dragged him from a hospital emergency room and beat and stomped him to death.

Reasonable question — Responding to the assertion that New Orleans cops steal so much because they're low paid, attorney Mary Howell retorted: "There are plenty of poorly paid people in this city. How much money do you have to pay them so they don't steal? \$50,000? \$100,000?"

We're puzzled — The prime minister of New Zealand is getting flack on his proposal to drop the United Kingdom's royal honors system, including knighthood.

Ranking judges are arguing that the titles compensate for the income drop lawyers suffer on becoming judges. Their wages and expense allowances range from \$140,000 plus, to more than \$200,000 (N.Z.\$). The clippings we saw don't mention it, but can we assume that besides the honor, the titles have a cash value?

'Never tell people to think.' — To break a three-year slump in the apparel industry, one fashion expert admonishes retailers: "Re-establish authority. A bit of industry 'command' might spark the confidence women need to buy something different....By telling women to stick to their own personal 'style,' the industry has unwittingly caused women to buy clothing less frequently."

Castro speaks truth on U.S. aggression against Cuba

Invasions of Cuban airspace by U.S.-based counterrevolutionaries are nothing new. They began shortly after the January 1959 triumph of the revolution that overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista and brought a government of workers and peasants to power.

In a speech to the United Nations General Assembly Sept. 26, 1960, Cuban president Fidel Castro documented the accelerating U.S. political, economic, and military aggression at the time, including deadly assaults on Cuban territory by air.

Printed below are excerpts from that speech by Castro. The entire text of the Cuban president's UN address appears in *To Speak the Truth: Why Washington's Cold War Against Cuba Doesn't End* (see ad on page 9). This book, published by Pathfinder Press, is a collection of speeches by Castro and Ernesto Che Guevara at the United Nations.

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BY FIDEL CASTRO

One afternoon an airplane coming from the north flew over one of our sugar mills and dropped a bomb. This was a strange and unheard-of event, but we knew full well where that plane came from. On another afternoon another plane flew over our sugarcane fields and dropped a few incendiary bombs. These events, which began sporadically, continued systematically.

One afternoon, while a number of U.S. tourist agents were visiting Cuba as part of an effort by the revolutionary government to promote tourism as a source of the nation's income, a U.S.-built plane — one of those used in the Second World War — flew over Havana, dropping pamphlets and a few hand grenades. Naturally some anti-aircraft guns went into action. The result was more than forty victims, between the grenades dropped by the plane and the anti-aircraft fire since, as you know, some of the shells explode on contact. As I said, the result was more than forty victims. These included children with their entrails torn out, and old men and old women.²

This was not the first time. No, young girls and boys, the elderly, men and women, were often killed in the villages of Cuba by U.S. bombs supplied to the dictator Batista.

On another occasion, eighty workers were killed in a mysterious explosion — too mysterious — aboard a ship bringing Belgian weapons into our country. This occurred following great efforts by the U.S. government to prevent the Belgian government from selling us weapons.³

There have been dozens of victims in the war: eighty families were left orphaned by that explosion; forty victims of an airplane calmly flying over our territory. The U.S. authorities denied that these planes took off from U.S. territory. But the plane was sitting right there in its hangar. One of our magazines published a photograph of this plane in its hangar, and then the U.S. authorities seized the plane. Then, of course, an account of the affair was issued to the effect that this was not very important and that the victims had not died from the bombs but from the anti-aircraft fire. Meanwhile those responsible

for this crime were wandering about peacefully in the United States, where they were not even prevented from continuing their acts of aggression.

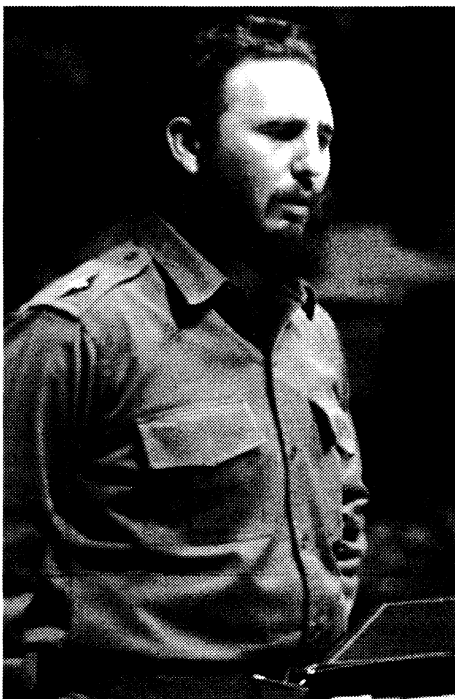
I take this opportunity to tell His Excellency, the representative of the United States, that there are many mothers in Cuba who are still waiting to receive a telegram of condolence for the children murdered by U.S. bombs.

The planes came and went. There was no proof — although you must define what you mean by proof. The plane was right there, photographed and seized. Yet we were told this plane had not dropped any bombs; it is not known how the U.S. authorities were so well informed. Pirate aircraft continued to fly over our territory dropping incendiary bombs. Millions upon millions of pesos were lost in the burning of sugarcane fields. Many working people who saw this wealth destroyed, a wealth that was now theirs, were themselves burned or wounded in the struggle against the persistent and tenacious bombings by these pirate aircraft.

Then one day, while flying over one of our sugar mills, a plane blew up when its bomb exploded, and the revolutionary government had the opportunity of gathering the remains of the pilot. It was in fact a U.S. pilot, whose papers were found, and it was a U.S. plane and we found all the proofs about the airfield from which he had taken off. That plane had passed over two bases in the United States.⁴

Now it was a case that could not be denied; it was clear the plane had come from the United States. This time, in view of the irrefutable proof, the U.S. government did give an explanation to the Cuban government. Its conduct in this case was not the same as in the U-2 case.⁵ When it was proved that the planes were coming from the United States, the U.S. government did not proclaim its right to burn our cane fields. On this occasion, the U.S. government apologized, and said it was sorry. Well, we were lucky, after all, because after the U-2 incident the U.S. government did not even apologize; it proclaimed its right to fly over Soviet territory. Too bad for the Soviets! [Applause]

But we do not have many anti-aircraft batteries and the planes continued to come until the sugar harvest was over. When there was no more sugarcane, the bombings stopped. We were the only country in the world to suffer this harassment, although I do recall that at the time of his visit to Cuba President Sukarno [of Indonesia] told us that we were not the only ones, that they too had problems with U.S. planes flying over their territory. I don't know if I've committed an indiscretion here; I don't expect so.



Cuban president Fidel Castro at UN General Assembly, Sept. 26, 1960.

The fact of the matter is that at least in this peaceful hemisphere, we were the one country that, without being at war with anyone, had to stand the constant attack of pirate planes. How could those planes come and go from U.S. territory with impunity?

We invite the delegates here to ponder this, and we also invite the people of the United States — if by chance they have the opportunity of knowing the facts being discussed here — to ponder this matter. Because according to the statements of the U.S. government itself, U.S. territory is completely protected against any air incursion, and U.S. air defenses are infallible. It is said that the air defenses of the world they call "free" — because, so far as we are concerned, we became free

on Jan. 1, 1959 — are impregnable.

If this is the case, how is it that planes — and I'm not talking about supersonic planes, but simple propeller planes flying barely 150 miles an hour — how is it that these planes are able to come and go from U.S. territory at will? How can they go through two bases and come back over these two same bases without the U.S. government even being aware that these planes are coming and going from their territory?

It means one of two things. Either the U.S. government is lying to the U.S. people and the United States is defenseless against aerial incursions, or the U.S. government was an accomplice in these aerial incursions. [Applause]

¹ The bombing of Cuban sugar mills and cane fields by planes taking off from the United States began in October 1959.

² The incident Castro is describing took place on October 21, 1959. In the attack two were killed and forty-seven wounded.

³ On March 4, 1960, the French ship *La Coubre*, bringing Belgian munitions, blew up in the Havana harbor, killing eighty-one people.

⁴ On February 18, 1960, a plane blew up while attempting to bomb a Cuban sugar mill. The body of pilot Robert Ellis Frost, a U.S. citizen, was recovered in the wreckage.

⁵ On May 1, 1960, a U.S. U-2 spy plane was shot down over the Soviet Union and the pilot captured. The plane was more than 1,200 miles inside Soviet territory.

— 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —

THE MILITANT

Published in the Interest of the Working People

March 12, 1971

Price 10¢

MARCH 1 — On February 15, the Polish bureaucracy announced that the price rises that sparked a massive workers' uprising in December were being rescinded. This is the most significant concession that Communist Party Chief Edward Gierek has been forced to make since he took power after Wladyslaw Gomulka was ousted in December.

This latest and most far-reaching retreat was the direct result of a textile strike in Lodz, Poland's second largest city. Eighty percent of the workers in 31 textile plants in and around Lodz are women, and the majority of the 10,000 strikers were women.

The workers in the cotton mills where the strikes took place are among the lowest paid in Poland. Added to this are inadequate child-care centers, insufficient maternity leaves, and the low number of women managers.

On Feb. 14, a four-man Politburo delegation headed by Premier Jaroszewicz spent 18 hours in Lodz trying to convince the striking women that their demands for a 15 percent wage hike were "unrealistic." These officials flew back to Warsaw, and the next day the regime surrendered, withdrawing an average 17 percent increase in food prices made on Dec. 12.

The working women of Lodz had won for every worker in Poland effective wage increases comparable to what they were

demanding for themselves.

THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS

March 9 1946

HOUSTON, Texas, Feb. 26 — A magnificent demonstration of ten to twenty thousand workers, both AFL and CIO, this morning forced city officials to back down on their strikebreaking threats and agree to deal with representatives of 700 city employees, members of AFL City-County Employees Union, on strike for the past six days.

This action climaxed months of negotiations between the City County Union and City Manager Edy (subsequently succeeded by Acting City Manager Nagle) for wage increases 'needed to bring up the incomes of city employees to meet the skyrocketing cost of living. The City Managers brazenly backed down on their promises to grant increases wages "if an increase in the tax rate is granted by the voters." The tax bill was passed but the promises were not fulfilled.

Immediately the Mayor, the City Manager and City Council raised the slogan: "You Can't Strike Against the Government." Mayor Otis Massey called upon Texas' reactionary Governor Coke Stevenson to supply Texas Ranger units, battalions of the State Guard and other armed forces to "protect" the city. In Austin, Governor Stevenson immediately promised "anything you need" while fascist-minded Lieutenant Governor John Lee Smith announced: "This is nothing more no less than rebellion!" He demanded legislation to "deal with strikes."

U.S. hands off Cuba now!

Continued from front page

Pathfinder books, which tell the truth about Cuba.

What each reader of the *Militant* does in the next few days can make a difference. Acting now can win more people to the struggle against the Clinton administration's escalating threats, provocations, and economic warfare against Cuba.

By shooting down two belligerent planes that had invaded Cuban airspace and were headed toward Havana — the second such violation that day, and the 10th since May 1994 — the Cuban revolutionary armed forces did much more than carry out a legitimate act of self-defense by a revolutionary people and government repeatedly targeted for aggression by the U.S. rulers for more than 37 years.

This action struck a blow for the interests of working people and the oppressed in the United States and throughout the world.

Cuban revolutionaries did not allow the campaign of U.S.-engineered provocations to pick up momentum. They know it is an illusion to think that acting meekly in the face of incessant probing and pushing by the Yankee colossus is the road to peace. By standing up to Washington and the counterrevolutionary forces it nurtures and protects, the Cuban revolutionaries helped counter the U.S. rulers' preparations for war.

Working people around the world will benefit from these deeds by our Cuban brothers and sisters and their revolutionary government.

Washington can't act with impunity

The most mistaken and dangerous conclusion workers can draw from the U.S. government's aggressive acts is that the imperialist rulers can act with impunity. That when the U.S. capitalists decide to use their armies, cops, and other repressive state institutions against working people, their power is simply overawing, they are bound to have their way.

If that were true, then no victory would ultimately be possible in any struggle against declining wages, worsening living and job conditions, racism, sexism, or the many other forms of exploitation and oppression inherent to capitalism. Imperialism's march toward fascist brutalization and a catastrophic world war would be inevitable, whatever the twists and turns along the way.

Ever since the opening of the revolutionary struggle for power in Cuba in the early 1950s, however, Cuban working people and the communist leadership they forged have consistently, and without bravado or adventurism, given the lie to any such notion.

Against enormous odds, they emerged victorious over the U.S.-backed Batista tyranny in January 1959.

They turned back Washington's multiple attempts — including by means of the Bay of Pigs mercenary landing in April 1961, and then the so-called missile crisis in October 1962 — to destroy the Cuban revolution in its opening years. They forced the U.S. rulers to back off initial hopes for a successful invasion, in face of what Patrick Buchanan — the ultrarightist candidate for the Republican presidential nomination — conceded February 25 on the CBS talk show "Face the Nation" would be "extraordinary" casualties inflicted on U.S. forces in such an action.

They've consistently refused to honor U.S. imperialism's claims to a piece of Cuban territory in Guantánamo, forcibly occupied by Washington for close to a century.

And Cuban internationalists have stood side by side with battling workers and peasants from Vietnam, to the Middle East, to Angola, to Central and South America, in resisting imperialist-organized tyranny and aggression.

Who can doubt that it has now become more difficult to recruit pilots and others to carry out provocations and terrorist actions against the Cuban revolution?

That fact, and what it registers about the relationship of class forces in this hemisphere, weighs in the scales on the side of every working person and revolutionary-minded young person who takes up the struggle against imperialist pillage, landlordism, and capitalism anywhere in the world.

What's more, that political reality is in the interests of every unionist, fighter for Black freedom, opponent of women's oppression, and others combating social injustice and inequality in the United States and other imperialist countries.

Isn't that also the lesson of British prime minister John Major's recent announcement of a date to begin all-party talks on Ireland, including representatives of the Sinn Féin? Only the determined refusal of Irish working people and youth to submit to the yoke of the British crown and its military occupation of Northern Ireland brought about this day.

And wasn't the five-year-long *intifada* in Palestine what made it impossible for Tel Aviv to establish a "Greater Israel" on the basis of its military conquests in the 1967 war?

When working people organize together and act, even facing great odds, we can push the exploiters back.

Bipartisan war drive

The war drive against Cuba today is bipartisan and is in fact spearheaded by prominent Democrats. President Clinton, Secretary of State Warren Christopher, and UN

representative Madeleine Albright are leading the campaign of lies and organizing to expand the economic war against Cuba.

Bourgeois public opinion ranges from those who identify with the course of the White House to those who wring their hands and "regret the tragedy" or "deplore the loss of life." But the great tragedy was in fact averted when the Cuban air force prevented the intruders from carrying through their hostile mission.

There are growing stakes for working people and youth right now in opposing each and every hostile measure by Washington against the Cuban government and people. On February 28, Clinton and Congress announced agreement on further tightening of the U.S. government's decades-long economic embargo of Cuba, uniting around support for the reactionary Helms-Burton bill. And on February 26, the White House announced the suspension of charter air travel from the United States to Cuba, along with measures contrary to workers' rights and interests such as further curtailing travel by Cuban diplomats in the United States.

How far Washington will go will be determined by the response to its announced measures — especially within the United States.

Working people should demand an immediate end to the brutal embargo.

We must call for the U.S. government to repeal every aspect of its unconstitutional ban on travel to Cuba once and for all.

We must demand that Washington grant visas to Cubans wishing to visit the United States, and that it lift the travel restrictions on Cuban government officials living within U.S. borders.

And we must oppose the plans announced by the White House to expand the operations of the cynically named Radio Martí, which is in fact the voice of the Yankee empire that will always resent "losing" Cuba.

Economic recovery in Cuba

Washington is taking these measures out of weakness. Beginning in 1990, Cuba's aid and trade at preferential prices with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe collapsed, triggering what the Cubans refer to as the "special period." But six years later, working people in Cuba are stronger after organizing to confront the consequences of the crisis and putting their country on the road to economic recovery. Slowly, with enormous collective effort, living conditions are again improving.

As a result, the masters of the U.S. empire are frustrated. Their hopes and predictions that the government and its communist leadership in Cuba would collapse are not coming true. The tightening of the embargo and the continued provocations by groups like Brothers to the Rescue are acts of desperation, not strength.

Working people and many youth within the United States are more open than before to evidence that Washington lies about Cuba and its government.

Central to taking advantage of this political space to organize and resist, opponents of Washington's war drive have the responsibility to help get out the truth about the socialist revolution in Cuba and why the U.S. rulers remain so determined to overturn it.

Take day off work, sell 'Militant,' Pathfinder books

We urge all workers who are opposed to Washington's course to take a day off work or a day off from school in the coming week to help accomplish this goal.

Order a large bundle of the *Militant*, if you haven't already called one in, and sell dozens of copies to workers on the job, at factory gates, picket lines, door-to-door in working-class neighborhoods, on the campuses, and at social protest actions.

Only in these pages will you and other workers find the facts we need each week to answer Washington's lies about Cuba and organize more effectively to combat the U.S. war moves.

As you do so, invite workers and youth to participate at the Friday night Militant Labor Forums that socialists all over the world are helping to organize and build, to discuss the truth about the Cuban revolution and how to respond to Washington's aggression.

When the U.S. imperialists initiated this latest step-up in their unceasing campaign against Cuba, leaders of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists participating in a national party leadership conference in New York City were already discussing a goal of selling 1,550 copies of *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War: 1956-58* by Ernesto Che Guevara between now and April 1. More than 700 copies have so far been sold by communist workers and youth to co-workers on the job, in the unions, and at plant gates, as well as to students and others on the streets and at political events around a wide variety of labor and social issues.

As the U.S. government announced plans to seek condemnation of the Cuban government by the United Nations Security Council, the socialist leaders responded by also pledging to sell as many copies as possible of *To Speak the Truth: Why Washington's 'Cold War' Against Cuba Doesn't End*. This book contains speeches by two central leaders of the Cuban revolution, Fidel Castro and Che Guevara, in front of various bodies of the United Nations. Castro and Guevara used that platform effectively to rebut, point by point, all the U.S. government lies of that day, as well as to explain the attractive power

Revolutionary Cuba answers provocations

Continued from Page 8

the statement continued: "We have confronted this provocation with great patience, but patience has its limits. The responsibility for whatever happens will fall, exclusively, on those who encourage, plan, execute, or tolerate these acts of piracy."

Despite this clear warning, on January 9 and again on January 13, 1996, 2 small planes coming from Opa-locka airport flew over Havana province scattering leaflets.

"One day they drop leaflets, another day maybe they try to introduce weapons into our country," said Ricardo Alarcón, president of Cuba's national assembly, during a televised February 26 press conference in Havana on the most recent overflights. Alarcón is the former foreign minister and chief United Nations representative of the Cuban government.

"Why has the U.S. decided that [the planes] were unarmed?" Alarcón asked. He pointed out that a substantial number of weapons can be and have been carried into Cuban territory in such small craft.

In fact, murderous assaults organized by U.S.-based "civilians," using "civilian" planes, boats, and small weapons, have taken the lives of many workers, farmers, and youth in Cuba ever since their first revolutionary encroachments on the land and properties of U.S. capitalists some 35 years ago.

Nonviolent civil disobedience?

Basulto seeks to portray Brothers to the Rescue as a "humanitarian" organization that sometimes also engages in Mahatma Gandhi- or Martin Luther King-style nonviolent civil disobedience over Cuban airspace.

A cursory look at Basulto's own political history gives the lie to these claims. In 1961 he trained with the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency and participated in the invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs that was held off by Cuban militia units and then quickly crushed by Cuba's armed forces. Escaping death or capture, he made his way to the Guantánamo naval base — Cuban territory

Continued on Page 15

of the example set by the socialist revolution in Cuba to toilers the world over.

Carefully read, these books explain why the imperialists hate and fear the Cuban working class and its communist vanguard. They explain why the U.S. rulers are pressing their current policy moves to weaken, divide, and ultimately overthrow the revolutionary government in Havana — as they have done from the moment Cuba's Rebel Army overthrew the dictatorship of Batista.

Readers will find out, for example, about the true, 37-year-long record of U.S.-organized military aggression and terrorist operations, including numerous examples of terror from "civilian aircraft" in the skies over Cuba, "civilian motorboats" in its waters, and "civilian volunteers" on its beaches.

Working people — many of whom have discovered in life how the government and daily press lie about their own strikes and other struggles — will be more open to the evidence presented by the Cuban government of Washington's long-standing complicity with counterrevolutionary groups such as the so-called Brothers to the Rescue. If that were not the case — more will begin to ask — then how could a group openly operating from U.S. soil send more than two dozen planes into Cuban airspace over the past 20 months, with each instance documented by the Cuban government and brought to the attention of U.S. authorities?

As they have done ever since making a revolution, Cuban workers and youth are once again demonstrating their determination to defend it by any means necessary. In doing so, they are helping to stay the hand of the greatest war-maker in the Americas and in the world — the bipartisan rulers in Washington.

This year, a range of activities is being organized across the United States to encourage the exchange of ideas and experiences between working people and youth in this country and in Cuba — speaking tours, brigades to Cuba, a delegation to a congress of Cuban trade unionists, and numerous others. Many of these educational and protest activities are being sponsored by the National Network on Cuba and the local coalitions and committees that make it up across the country.

The Socialist Workers Party urges all supporters of the Cuban revolution to redouble these efforts, as we work together to organize emergency street protests and public forums everywhere, demanding a halt to all provocations and assaults against Cuba by the Clinton administration, Congress, and the rightist forces they nurture and encourage.

We need to reach out to striking workers, working farmers, youth defending abortion clinics and mobilizing against police brutality and racism, and every democratic-minded person to join in demanding:

Stop the provocations against Cuba!

End the trade embargo!

Repeal the unconstitutional travel restrictions!

Normalize relations with Havana!

U.S. hands off Cuba!

Cuban government answers provocations

Continued from Page 14

forcibly occupied by the U.S. government. Basulto's own Cessna still has a large "2506" painted in gold on its side, harking back to his days as a member of Bay of Pigs Brigade 2506.

In 1962, Basulto commandeered a high-speed boat mounted with a small cannon from Miami into Havana harbor and fired on a Cuban hotel.

In the 1980s, Basulto broadened out his counterrevolutionary activities, participating in work to back the U.S.-organized contras seeking to overthrow the revolutionary government in Nicaragua.

It is there, in fact, that Basulto may have encountered a real connection with government-sponsored terror against a civilian aircraft — U.S.-government sponsored terrorism, that is. Washington's choice to organize its supply flights for the contras flown out of El Salvador's Ilopango airport was another Cuban counterrevolutionary named Luis Posada, widely known to have organized (along with Orlando Bosch) the 1976 bombing of a Cubana Airlines commercial flight taking off from Barbados. All 73 passengers on board were killed. The downing of a plane over Nicaragua piloted by U.S. citizen Eugene Hasenfus in October 1986 exposed Washington's Ilopango operation and forced the U.S. rulers to reorganize their support for the contra terror.

Further information about Basulto and his Brothers to the Rescue was provided in an interview broadcast over Cuban television February 26 with Juan Pablo Roque, a former MiG-23 pilot in the Cuban air force who left the island and came to the United States in 1992. While living in Miami, Roque had joined up as a pilot for Brothers to the Rescue. (Roque was subsequently interviewed by CNN as well.) He returned to Cuba in mid-February.

In 1993, Roque said, Basulto asked him "for information on specific stretches of highway in the city of Cienfuegos to land on and unload explosives that would be placed in high-tension towers in order to blow them up, damaging the National Energy System." In November 1994 and again in April 1995, Roque said, Basulto consulted with him "on antipersonnel ammunition that was to be introduced into the country in order to carry out assassinations" of Fidel Castro and other Cuban leaders. Direct CIA involvement in assassination attempts against Castro were documented in official U.S. Senate committee investigations in the 1970s.

Roque said that he personally reported all the information he had on the Brothers' activities and plans to the FBI (he cited the name and beeper number of the agent during the interview). On February 28 the FBI acknowledged that Roque had provided them information on Brothers to the Rescue but denied they had any foreknowledge of its planned operations on Saturday, February 24.

On February 27, Basulto announced plans to send two planes and a flotilla of boats to the area outside Cuban airspace and waters where he claims the two Cessnas were shot down. The display, during which Basulto says he will strew flowers on the sea, is scheduled for Saturday, March 2, a week after the initial events.

"We are going to continue confronting the Castro government," Basulto said at a rally of several hundred at the Opa-locka airport covered by the ABC television affiliate there. "You have our pledge on that. We have more planes and pilots left."

But another Brothers to the Rescue pilot told Miami's WSVN-TV, "We might have to rethink what we are doing."

Buchanan's response

Washington's stepped-up assault on the Cuban revolution provided stump-speech material for the candidates vying for the Republican Party 1996 presidential nomination.

U.S. senator Robert Dole, for example, suddenly renamed the "Helms-Burton bill" the "Dole-Helms bill," and said the Cuban government's action in shooting down the Cessnas was the product of the Clinton administration "coddling Castro."

A more telling response came from Patrick Buchanan, who is as concerned about gathering cadres for his incipient



Militant/Cindy Jaquith

Protest in Havana Feb. 1, 1990, against U. S. Coast Guard attack on Cuban ship *Hermann*. Washington has sponsored assaults and provocations by right-wing counterrevolutionary terror groups against the Cuban revolution since 1959.

fascist movement as he is about the outcome of this year's Republican primaries and summer nominating convention. Buchanan once again demonstrated that his virulent "America Firstism" and isolationism have nothing to do with opposition to the use of U.S. military might abroad, as his views have sometimes been mistakenly portrayed in the capitalist media.

Interviewed on the CBS Sunday morning news program *Face the Nation*, Buchanan said he believes "American fighter aircraft should be patrolling international waters ... and if Cuban planes came up to shoot down people who are in international waters, we would shoot down the planes."

"It's got to be United States policy to remove Fidel Castro from power," he said. "I'm not recommending an invasion, but I am recommending the kind of overall pressure and plan — diplomatic, political, and otherwise — which would remove Mr. Castro from power as rapidly as possible."

Pressed by a reporter to explain why he wasn't advocating immediate military action against Cuba, Buchanan replied: "I don't recommend an invasion because I think the cost in life, Cuban and American, would be extraordinary."

That's the conclusion virtually all U.S. bourgeois political figures reluctantly came to at the time of the October 1962 missile crisis, which Democratic president John Kennedy initially hoped might provide the pretext for such an assault. According to previously classified government documents released in the past several years, however, the administration scrapped those plans when informed by the Pentagon of its estimate that more than 18,000 U.S. casualties might be sustained in the first 10 days of fighting the armed and determined Cuban people.

It was that political reality about the revolutionary preparedness and conviction of Cuban working people — not the Kremlin's nuclear arsenal, let alone the U.S. rulers' claims to respect national sovereignty — that forced Washington to shelve its hopes for a second, more successful Bay of Pigs.

The February 27 reply by the Cuban foreign ministry to the Clinton administration's new hostile measures referred back to this lesson from the history of the socialist revolution.

"Cuba neither fears nor accepts threats," the statement said. "We have known them for more than 35 years and have never trembled before them, not even when they took on the character of potential nuclear destruction...."

"These events occur as we approach the 35th anniversary of the victory at Playa Girón [Bay of Pigs], with our total and unbreakable determination to once again confront and crush any similar or expanded attacks, if circumstances force us to do so, guided by the permanent principle of waging a defensive war that would never end in success by the aggressors."

As part of its efforts to marshal bourgeois public opinion behind its campaign

of threats and slanders against Cuba, Washington called on the United Nations Security Council to condemn the Cuban government for its actions.

Despite efforts by the delegation from China to schedule the meeting at a time when it could be addressed by Cuban foreign minister Roberto Robaina, Washington's chief delegate, Madeleine Albright — also the rotating president of the 15-member UN body in February — insisted that the council not adjourn February 26 until a statement had been agreed to.

After meeting 16 hours, council members unanimously accepted a "presidential statement" between 3:45 and 3:50 a.m. in the wee hours of the morning, Tuesday, February 27. According to a note by the Cuban foreign ministry released later that day, the U.S. State Department issued a visa to Robaina less than one hour later; Robaina was traveling to New York through Mexico on his way to present Cuba's position before the session.

The statement said the Security Council "strongly deplores the shooting down by the Cuban air force of two civil aircraft ... which has apparently resulted in the death of four persons." It called on "the governments concerned to cooperate fully" with an investigation into the incident by the International Civil Aviation Organization, which it requested to prepare a report for Security Council consideration "as soon as possible."

The Cuban foreign ministry note on the Security Council action points out that "the statement is quite different from what the United States intended." The U.S. government had initially proposed a resolution to "condemn" the Cuban government's "unlawful use of force" as a "threat to international order." And the so-called presidential statement was issued without a formal vote, although accepted unanimously by all 15 members, including the permanent delegations from China and Russia and the three member governments with rotating status that are members of the Movement of Nonaligned Countries: Chile, Honduras, and Guinea-Bissau.

Prior to the Security Council session, Russian foreign ministry spokesperson Grigory Karasin issued a statement saying that "concrete measures should be taken, not in small part by the Americans, to avert conscious violations of Cuban air space, since this is a provocative factor." And after the Russian delegation agreed to the presidential statement introduced by Albright, Russian president Boris Yeltsin remarked that while, "I regret this incident.... I think the UN Security Council was right in letting, in a civilized manner, the United States understand that it cannot declare war over every such incident."

The February 28 note by the Cuban foreign ministry denounced the Security Council's statement and the refusal to postpone acting on it for just a few hours so that Robaina could participate. It said the Security Council "has a terrible history of acting in a biased manner, subordinate to the interests of the big powers" and that it has "become a dependency of the U.S. State Department, ... a kind of universal

high court to judge any country which disobeys its designs." The note said that "the United States, always supported by the Western Allies," uses its troops "under the UN flag like a police corps with planetary duties."

After he arrived in New York, Robaina called for the convening of a special session of the UN General Assembly, in which all member countries have delegates, to hear the Cuban government's position and the facts it has gathered.

Refuting the premise of the Security Council statement, the Cuban foreign ministry note pointed to the "need to clearly define what a civilian aircraft is. Many crimes have been committed against our nation by so-called civilian aircraft coming from the U.S. With 'civilian aircraft' counterrevolutionary pilots bombed Havana and other places in Cuba," the note said. "With 'civilian aircraft' they have dropped explosives and incendiary devices on our sugar cane plantations and our economic facilities. 'Civilian aircraft' have been used to introduce spies and saboteurs in our country, or, what is worse, biological warfare has been carried out."

U.S.-sponsored bombing of Cuban canefields and sugar mills, using "civilian planes," began as early as October 1959, less than a year after the victory of the Cuban revolution. In February 1960, for example, U.S. pilot Robert Ellis Frost was killed when his aircraft exploded while trying to bomb a sugar mill. (See the excerpt from a September 1960 speech by Fidel Castro to the United Nations on page 13 of this issue. It is reprinted from the Pathfinder book, *To Speak the Truth: Why Washington's 'Cold War' against Cuba Doesn't End*, a collection of speeches by Castro and Ernesto Che Guevara before various UN bodies.)

Just a few years ago, in October 1992, a "civilian" speedboat was used by Florida-based "civilians" to spray a tourist hotel on Cuba's northern coast with rifle fire.

The year before, three Cuban counterrevolutionaries had been captured on the island's northwestern coast, equipped with a stock of weapons and explosives. They had been dropped off in Cuba from a pleasure craft. Their mission, they acknowledged, was to set off bombs in movie theaters and recreation areas, as well as oil refineries, sugar mills, and elsewhere.

No compromise on sovereignty

The February 28 foreign ministry note concluded by stating that the Cuban government would cooperate with the investigation by the International Civil Aviation Organization called for in the Security Council statement. This was true, it said, despite the fact that the inquiry was "part of the United States' maneuver to bring this issue before the Security Council."

"We don't fear [an investigation]," the note said. "On the contrary, we accept it and demand that it be speedy and impartial."

"Nevertheless," the note concluded, "there is something Cuba will discuss neither with the Security Council nor with experts of any organization: our right and duty to protect the sovereignty of the country, preserve our frontiers, and defend the independence of our homeland at whatever cost is necessary."

Miami forum on Cuba

MIAMI — Supporters of the Miami Militant Labor Forum decided to respond to the barrage of anti-Cuba news coverage by changing the March 1 forum to "U.S. Hands Off Cuba, End the U.S. Embargo."

Andrés Gómez, the head of the Antonio Maceo Brigade; representatives of the Miami Coalition to End the U.S. Economic Blockade of Cuba and of the Socialist Workers Party; and others will be speaking.

The forum has been announced on Spanish-language TV stations 51 and 23, which described it as a pro-Castro event at the Pathfinder bookstore. Some right-wingers have called the bookstore to complain.

20,000 in Germany protest job cuts

BY CARL-ERIK ISACSSON
AND CATHARINA TIRSEN

STOCKHOLM — Twenty thousand workers demonstrated February 22 in the German port of Bremerhaven against the threatened closure of shipyards by Bremer Vulkan, the country's biggest shipbuilder. Workers also occupied the company's shipyards both in Bremen and in the eastern city of Stralsund.

"Even if the board of directors decides to shut down the shipyard, we will continue working," declared Lothar Brau, 39, who has worked at the shipyard for 15 years and has no hopes of getting a new job, to the Swedish daily *Svenska Dagbladet*. He and other workers were blocking the gates to check all trucks leaving the shipyard to stop machinery and materials from being removed.

Bremer Vulkan applied for protection from its creditors February 21 to avoid bankruptcy. This comes at a time of downsizing and profit losses for other German companies such as Grundig, Deutsche Aerospace AG, AEG, and Daimler-Benz.

Unit labor costs in Germany have risen 22 percent since 1990, compared to a 10 percent drop in the United States in the same period, according to the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development. This is one indication of how far the German capitalists lag behind their U.S. business rivals in cutting workers' wages and social benefits.

Unemployment, privatizations

Meanwhile, unemployment in Germany has reached a post-World War II record of 4.2 million, or 10 percent.

Bremer Vulkan is the biggest industrial employer in the east German state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, and one of the biggest in the west German city-state of Bremen, where unemployment reached 15.2 percent in January. Schools, theaters, and museums in Bremen are decaying or being closed down in the name of reduc-



Some 20,000 people protesting in German port February 22 against threatened closure of shipyards. Bremer Vulkan, the country's largest shipbuilder, expects losses of \$690 million for 1995.

ing the state debt.

Before the privatization of the Bremen shipyard in 1986, the city had been the largest shareholder in the company. Under the chairmanship of Friedrich Henne-mann, former state secretary for economics of Bremen, the company launched a big expansion plan after Germany's reunification. It bought up the previously state-owned East German shipyards in Stralsund and Wismar at a time when German shipbuilding was already facing increased competition from Asian and Scandinavian shipbuilders.

Bremer Vulkan received \$586 million from the European Commission earmarked for investment in the former East German shipyards. The European Commission now demands the money back, charging that \$415 million never reached the shipyards in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern but was redirected to com-

pany operations in western Germany.

The Treuhand, the government agency that was in charge of privatization of nationalized companies in the former East Germany, had been "reluctant to criticize publicly Bremer Vulkan's activities in eastern Germany lest questions were raised about the Treuhand's privatization methods and the use of subsidies," the February 22 *Financial Times* reported.

The Bremer Vulkan group expects losses of \$690 million for 1995 in addition to its unpaid bank loans of more than \$965 million. It also needs \$1.5 billion for 1996 to pay its bills. German economics minister Günter Rexrodt stated, "Anyone who thinks he can restore the company to health with fresh money from Bonn is mistaken."

The company's threats of closure have sparked protests by workers in a number of cities. On February 20, thousands of

shipyard workers demonstrated in Bremen. Two days earlier workers began an occupation of parts of the shipyard there.

Protests in east and west

On February 21 schools, shops, and banks were closed in Vegesack, a district of Bremen, as 6,000 workers and others demonstrated at the main square. Another 2,000 workers in Bremerhaven, 30 miles from Bremen, occupied that town's train station for an hour.

On the same day the *Volkswerft* (People's Shipyard) in the city of Stralsund, in the east, was occupied by the workers. And in Rosstock, also in eastern Germany, where the company owns two non-shipbuilding subsidiaries, Diesel-motoren and Neptun Industrie, workers protested as well.

According to the daily *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, the prime minister of the state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Berndt Seite, called for calmness and promised "new viable concepts" for Bremer Vulkan.

Harald Ringstorff, minister of industries in the same state, denounced the protesting workers, saying their occupation was "completely exaggerated." Ringstorff also criticized the board of directors in Bremen, demanding that the diverted \$415 million from the European Commission be paid to the shipyards in eastern Germany.

Meanwhile, 20,000 workers demonstrated February 22 in Bremerhaven. "To hell with Europe," one young shipyard apprentice told *Svenska Dagbladet*, saying he did not expect to get a job after his training. He blamed the banks and the politicians too. "They are just lying and forget about us," he stated.

In the state elections in Bremen last year, the rightist party German People's Union (DVU) received 2.5 percent of the vote. In Bremerhaven, where unemployment is even higher, the DVU got almost 6 percent of the vote and won 3 of 48 seats in the local assembly.

Irish fighters force Major to concede all-party talks

BY TONY HUNT

BELFAST, Northern Ireland — In face of unflinching resistance by fighters for Irish freedom, British prime minister John Major announced February 28 that London had agreed to all-party talks on the future of Ireland. The talks will include Sinn Fein, the leading party fighting for an end to British domination of Northern Ireland.

Major dropped his previous insistence on total "decommissioning" of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) as a prior condition for all-party talks.

On February 18, some 5,000 people, mostly from working-class Catholic areas, marched in west Belfast to demand "All-party Peace Talks Now!"

Many demonstrators expressed their anger at London's stalling on all-inclusive talks. The "biggest single failure" of the cease-fire, Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams told the marchers, was the refusal of the British government to talk. This refusal was due to "people within the British establishment who live on the old memory when Britain ruled most of the world and they colonized this island," Adams said. "We represent a section of the people on this island who have never allowed our minds to be colonized."

Earlier Adams told the *Andersontown News* that "For 18 months we had no war but we had no peace either."

The Major government proved unable to use a February 9 bombing by the Irish Republican Army (IRA) in east London to derail the pressure for peace talks. That day the IRA announced it had ended an

18-month cease-fire.

David Heeley, 19, one of the marchers on February 18, said in an interview he had been "shocked" by the bombing. But Heeley, and several other Irish people interviewed by the *Militant*, blamed the British government.

John Major to blame

"I blame John Major" said one shopper at a local supermarket — referring to the British prime minister.

"We want peace," Heeley said, "but that will only come about through talks."

Another protester added, "The ordinary people of west Belfast don't want violence. But we also want justice."

Most of the banners on the demonstration carried the demand for all-party talks. One called for the release of Paddy Kelly, an Irish political prisoner dying of cancer whom London refuses to release.

On February 15, London dispatched another 500 soldiers to Northern Ireland, bringing the occupying force up to nearly 17,000 — close to its pre-peace level. The troops were not patrolling the streets in Belfast during the February 18 demonstration but were reported to be on patrol in border areas.

Leaders of loyalist gangs said February 25 they would not restart their murder campaign against Catholics or in the South — unless the IRA staged actions in the North. But a group of teenagers who are Catholic, from a "mixed" area five miles outside Belfast, told the *Militant* they were now getting more abuse from

Protestants in the street.

They were standing a short distance from Sean Graham's betting shop, in a Catholic enclave on the Ormeau Road, they said. A loyalist death-squad murdered five people there in 1992.

Nearby, on August 12 of last year, Royal Ulster Constabulary cops fired plastic bullets on local residents and supporters staging a peaceful sit-down protest against a loyalist parade through their neighborhood.

A third IRA bomb exploded in London February 18. One of those injured was Brendan Woolhead, 27, from Dublin. Because he was Irish he was treated as a suspect by London police and placed under armed guard in the hospital until his family intervened.

'No demonization'

Some 100,000 people participated in "peace rallies" February 25 in the Irish Republic, including 25,000 in Dublin. A rally in Belfast drew 15,000. A parallel event in London drew only 60. Speakers at these events, which called on the IRA to renew its cease-fire, included Irish prime minister John Bruton and U.S. ambassador Jean Kennedy Smith. Trade union leaders also spoke.

Sinn Fein members participated with placards stating "Make Peace Work, Negotiate Now." Responding to British condemnation of republicans, Gerry Adams said at the February 18 Belfast rally that they would refuse to be demonized. "We will tell them that we have been down that

road before and there is no going back," he stated. "We are not going to be held as scapegoats for the stupidity of the British and the intransigence of the unionist leadership."

Major government: weak and divided

Divisions inside the ruling Conservative Party regarding government policy on Ireland were highlighted February 19 on BBC's *Newsnight*. Conservative member of Parliament (MP) Nicholas Budgen called for the government to "crack down on the IRA" at the same time as winning the "confidence" of Catholics.

"We tried that for 25 years," retorted fellow Conservative MP Nicholas Scott, "and it didn't work." London, he said, had to "stick with the peace process." The government's weakness was underlined February 26 by a narrow one-vote victory in a no-confidence vote in Parliament.

Nine Ulster Unionists and two Conservatives voted against the government after debating a report on sales of military equipment to Iraq in the late 1980s. The report, by Richard Scott, criticized the government for changing its policy without informing Parliament.

Meanwhile, *The Irish News*, a Belfast daily read mostly by Catholics, reported 56 percent of opinion poll respondents in the north and 85 percent in the south favored all-party talks without preconditions. A *Sunday Times* poll in Britain found 63 percent supported talks with Sinn Fein "to restore the cease-fire" and 45 percent in favor of a united Ireland.